JEFFERSON
FRIEND OF FRANCE
1793

ILLUSTRATED

MEADE MINNIGERODE

JEFFERSON –Friend of France

LESS the tale of Jefferson than the story of his political dupe, the young man, as Meade Minnigerode says, "who during George Washington's prudently neutral administration, still believed in the sanctity of treaties; who . . . looked upon Jefferson as the only friend of France . . . An impetuous, ironical, terribly persistent, very magnificent young man."

The young man was Citizen Genet, French minister to the United States in 1793; a youthful envoy to a youthful country. He was thirty years old. Yet, despite his excellent diplomatic training at the French court, the Russian court, and what was now the French Republic, he was not enough of a diplomat. For one thing, he trusted Jefferson, who betrayed him . . .

Founded on private papers of Citizen Genet that have never before been available, this book brings a fresh point of view to such famous and vital questions as: What was the real fate of the lost Dauphin? Was Robespierre a secret agent of the Royalists all during the revolution? Was John Jay in league with King George?

The papers of Citizen Genet which Meade Minnigerode uses here offer solutions to these fascinating enigmas.

MEADE MINNIGERODE

COLLEGE OF ALAMEDA LIBRARY
WITHDRAWN
LENDING POLICY
IF YOU DAMAGE OR LOSE LIBRARY MATERIALS, THEN YOU WILL BE CHARGED FOR REPLACEMENT. FAILURE TO PAY AFFECTS LIBRARY PRIVILEGES, GRADES, TRANSCRIPTS, DIPLOMAS, AND REGISTRATION PRIVILEGES OR ANY COMBINATION THEREOF.

DATE DUE
FEB 19 '75
OCT 22 '86
DEC 10 '86

E
313
G28

Minnigerode, Meade, 1887-

Jefferson, friend of France, 1793; the career of Edmond Charles Genet, minister plenipotentiary from the French Republic to the United States, as revealed by his private papers, 1763-1834, by Meade Minnigerode. With facsimile reproductions of documents. New York, London, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1928.

xiv, 447 p. front. (port.) pl., facsims. 25cm.

Bibliography: p. 429-439.

1. Genet, Edmond Charles Edouard, 1763-1834. 2. Jefferson, Thomas, Pres. U.S., 1743-1826.

BY MEADE MINNIGERODE

BIOGRAPHY

LIVES AND TIMES

AARON BURR (WITH SAMUEL H. WANDELL)

SOME AMERICAN LADIES

CERTAIN RICH MEN

JEFFERSON—FRIEND OF FRANCE

SOCIAL HISTORY

THE FABULOUS FORTIES, 1840-1850

PRESIDENTIAL YEARS, 1787-1860

FICTION

LAUGHING HOUSE

THE BIG YEAR

OH SUSANNA

THE QUEEN OF SHEBA

THE SEVEN HILLS

CORDELIA CHANTRELL

COCKADES

BIBLIOGRAPHY

SOME PERSONAL LETTERS OF HERMAN MELVILLE AND A BIBLIOGRAPHY. BRICK ROW BOOK SHOP, INC.

EDMOND CHARLES GENET

In his twenty-fifth year. Reproduced for the first time from a photograph of the original portrait painted at Versailles, in 1787, by Wertmüller, now in the possession of the Genet family in America. Adolf Ulrich Wertmüller was born in Stockholm, in 1751, and died in Wilmington, Delaware, an American citizen, in 1811. He was a member of the French Academy, and Painter to the French and Swedish Courts. He painted the portrait of Marie Antoinette and her Children, and several portraits of Washington.

JEFFERSON
FRIEND OF FRANCE

1793

THE CAREER
of
EDMOND CHARLES GENET

MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY FROM THE FRENCH REPUBLIC TO THE UNITED STATES, AS REVEALED BY HIS PRIVATE PAPERS

1763–1834

By

MEADE MINNIGERODE

"Skillful in the art of deception, you continued to see me . . . for I told you everything, I consulted you about everything. . . ."

CITIZEN GENET to THOMAS JEFFERSON, Jamaica, Long Island, July 4, 1797.

With Facsimile Reproductions of Documents

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
New York — London
The Knickerbocker Press
1928

JEFFERSON—FRIEND OF FRANCE

Copyright, 1928
by
G. P. Putnam s Sons

Made in the United States of America

For

HOPE and JIM

"Nothing is more charming than a correspondence well kept up."

Edmé Genet to his son, Edmond Charles,
Versailles, May, 1779.

EDMOND CHARLES GENET

Born at Versailles, January 8, 1763.

Commissioned in the Dragoons, 1779.

Secretary to the French Embassy at Berlin, 1780.

Secretary to the French Embassy at Vienna, 1781.

Secretary to the French Embassy at London, 1783.

Chief of the Bureau of Interpreters, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1781-1787.

Chargé d'Affaires of the French Embassy at St. Petersburg, 1787-1792.

Minister Plenipotentiary to Holland, 1792.

Adjutant General of the armies of the French Republic, 1792.

Special Envoy to the Republic of Geneva, 1792.

Minister Plenipotentiary to the United States of America, 1792-1794.

Died at Prospect Hill, Greenbush, near Albany, July 14, 1834.

"I was for seven years chief of a bureau at Versailles under the orders of Vergennes. I spent a year in London, two in Vienna, one in Berlin, five in Russia, and I am too well initiated in the mysteries of those Cabinets not to tremble at the fate which threatens America if the cause of liberty does not triumph wherever there is a throne."

CITIZEN GENET to THOMAS JEFFERSON,
New York, November 14, 1793.

INTRODUCTION

THIS volume is the result of a study of the private papers of Citizen Genet, now in the possession of his granddaughter, and rendered accessible for the first time to public inspection by her courtesy.

The history of these papers is extremely simple. From Citizen Genet and his second wife, Martha Osgood Genet —daughter of Samuel Osgood, Postmaster General of the United States—they passed to his sons by that marriage, and eventually to the younger son's widow, Augusta Kirtland Genet. They were by her given to a niece, who in turn transferred them to the present owner, a granddaughter of Citizen Genet and Cornelia Clinton Genet—daughter of George Clinton, Vice President of the United States—his first wife. So that, aside from the present owner, from the time of Citizen Genet's daughter-in-law these papers have passed through only one pair of hands.

That they should have survived at all, or, having survived, that they should have come down to us in any satisfactory state of preservation, is much more remarkable. Families are usually too prone to destroy accumulated documents, or, on the other hand, to cherish the dismembered remnants of inconsequential scribblings. But these papers are sufficiently intact—where the original papers have disappeared there exist copies and translations by Citizen Genet's son—they fill a sizable trunk, what they have to report is almost invariably important, the majority of them are clean, and fresh, and legible.

Some of them have travelled by carriage across Europe from St. Petersburg to Paris—that was in 1792—many of them crossed the Atlantic in a French frigate sailing with her guns at the portholes in the days of the French war with England in 1793; others have come rolling down the post roads of America, from New York, and Philadelphia, and Boston. Reports to Edmé Genet, the Citizen's father, from his American secret service agent in 1780; cipher messages from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Embassy at St. Petersburg; the letter from Louis XVI to Catherine II, which was never delivered; the minutes of the councils of war held over the great mutiny of the French fleet in New York harbor in 1793; eye witness accounts of the massacre at Cap Français in Santo Domingo, in June of that year; hundreds of rough drafts of Citizen Genet's own communications to his Government, to Thomas Jefferson, to Edmund Randolph, to George Clinton—here they all are, with the sand which was used to dry the ink still twinkling on the fine, rich paper.

Documents written to the sound of the drums of the French Revolution; messages penned by candle light under the booming of the funeral guns for Prince Potemkin; reports drawn up within sight of a city blazing with insurrection fires; letters composed while the pest carts rolled by through the plague swept streets of Philadelphia. There is a virtue in the papers themselves, in the feel of them, in the realization of the hands that have touched them. A charm in those old, precise handwritings, in those bold signatures with great flourishes, in those red seals embossed with the heraldry of ancient signet rings.

As for their contents, the papers may be said to deal with the history of Europe, of the West Indies and of America during the last forty years of the eighteenth century. Students of those periods will find among them a quantity of material concerning the diplomatic state of Europe in 1762 —a sort of Fugger News Letter of that time—and also con-

cerning the political intrigues centering around the court of Catherine II of Russia during the opening years of the French Revolution. These it is not within the province of this volume to discuss.

It is rather its purpose, while presenting the career of a remarkable young man—he was only thirty when he landed at Charleston—to show his many contacts with America, culminating in his mission to that country. And there, again, not so much the formal, detailed, chronological recital of his varied diplomatic acts and negotiations as the point of view concerning America which he brought with him, the manner in which he endeavored to obey his ambitious instructions, the attitude towards the United States on the part of the French Republic which he represented. The nature of the task which was imposed upon him, the spirit in which he sought so valiantly to fulfill it, the popular approval and the official obstruction which he encountered, and the method employed by the Federal Government to destroy him. A tale of perfidy unfolded in the midst of the roaring, ballad singing, head smashing American mob scene of 1793.

The tale of a young man who, during George Washington's prudently neutral Administration, still believed in the sanctity of treaties; who, in spite of Ralph Izard's advice, still looked upon Jefferson as the only true friend of France in America; and who, in the presence of Alexander Hamilton, still put his faith in the popular republican clamor of American affection for revolutionary France. A deluded young man. An impetuous, ironical, terribly persistent, very magnificent young man.

Reference has of course been made to standard biographies, historical works, collections and articles, to the published correspondence of contemporaries, to the national state papers, and to a group of Citizen Genet's own papers which had become separated during the years from the larger body, and which are to be found in the Library of Congress. Aside from these sources, the statements in this volume are

based on the papers in the possession of Citizen Genet's granddaughter. With the exception of his official American correspondence which has been published, and of certain extracts printed by his son, it is not believed that any public use of the papers has hitherto been made. In translating from the French—both as regards the personal letters and the drafts of the official communications—the present author has thought it permissible to make use of his own intimate acquaintance with that language in order to reproduce the spirit as well as the sense of the numerous documents existing in that tongue.

And while it is impossible to record every instance of cooperation and courtesy encountered during the preparation of a work such as the present one, the author wishes to express his appreciation of many services rendered by George Palmer Putnam, Roger Sherman, Ledyard Cogswell, Jr., and the authorities of the Library of Congress, the New York Public Library and the New York Historical Society.

And to the gracious lady who permitted the inspection of her grandfather's papers.

M. M.

January 1, 1928.

CONTENTS

PART I: THE BOY IN WHITE

1763–1793

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	The Clerk in Chief	3
II.	Secret Service	25
III.	Post Roads	48
IV.	Dilectissima Catherina	84
V.	Sentence of Death	119
VI.	Matches Burning	140
VII.	Rabbles and Rum	162
VIII.	Guns and Bells	185

PART II: THE CITIZEN

1793–1834

I.	Bonnets and Bumpers	201
II.	Some Documents	217
III.	Flora and Florida	245
IV.	Letters at Sea	272
V.	The Sailors	289
VI.	The Certificate Men	317

CHAPTER PAGE

VII.—Forlorn Hopes 337

VIII.—Cornelia's Farm 361

IX.—Forty Years 380

Appendix 413

Bibliography 429

Index 441

ILLUSTRATIONS AND REPRODUCTIONS

FACING PAGE

Edmond Charles Genet in His Twenty-fifth Year . *Frontispiece*

The Genet Heirloom: The Hair of Marie Antoinette, Queen of France, and of Her Son, the Dauphin, Later Louis XVII . . 8

Genet's Commission in the Dragoons 16

William Lee to Sartines, Minister of Marine 32

William Lee to Edmé Genet 40

William Lee to Edmé Genet 56

Vergennes, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Genet 64

Genet's Passport to London, in 1783 80

The Circular Letter of Louis XVI, King of France, to Catherine II, Empress of Russia 96

Montmorin, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Genet 112

Montmorin, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Genet 128

Genet to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs 144

Genet to Jefferson: First page of the duplicate letter of 1797 . 176

Genet to Jefferson: Last page of the duplicate letter of 1797 . 192

Genet to Jefferson: Sample pages of the duplicate letter of 1797 208

Memorandum of Genet's Interview with Hamilton . . . 224

FACING PAGE

Genet to Jefferson: Sample page of the duplicate letter of 1797 . 232

Affidavit of Benjamin Franklin Bache 240

General Galbaud's Proclamation 256

Genet to Jefferson: Sample pages from the duplicate letter of 1797 264

Deforgues, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Genet 280

Proclamation of the Civil Commissioners for French Santo Domingo 296

Findings of Genet's Court Naval 304

The Certificate of Jay and King 320

Jefferson to Genet 328

Genet to Fauchet, His Successor 352

Cornelia Clinton to Genet 368

Fauchet, Minister Plenipotentiary to the United States, to Genet . 384

The Ministry of Police, Government of the Directoire, to Genet . 400

JEFFERSON—FRIEND OF FRANCE

PART I

THE BOY IN WHITE

1763–1793

"I send you your white domino . . . so that you can go to the Opera ball. . . . You must be well dressed under the domino and wear white gloves. . . ."

EDMÉ GENET to his son, EDMOND CHARLES,
Versailles, February 1, 1777.

CHAPTER I

THE CLERK IN CHIEF

1

"ONLY the revolution which will occur some day in America . . . will put England back to that state of feebleness in which Europe will have no more to fear of her."

Choiseul, Minister of Foreign Affairs, speaking, in 1765, to his king, Louis XV of France. The Stamp Act in Massachusetts, discontent, protest, a spirit of revolt crackling behind the scenes in those distant colonies of England's America. Boycott, the non-importation agreement, and a man named Samuel Adams who wrote with a rebellious pen. England, the eternal enemy of France, and revolution coming one of these days in America to do her, God willing, incalculable damage. Something to watch with infinite attention. America.

Already in 1759—before the disastrous close of the Seven Years' War in Europe, before the humiliating loss of all Canada in America—Choiseul had seen it. "The true balance of power," he had told his ambassador to Sweden, "really resides in commerce and in America." The balance

of power, which must always be so contrived as to make of the throne of France the judgment seat of Europe. And in 1764 he had sent his agent Pontleroy to America, and in 1765 another, as in 1768 he was to send Baron de Kalb—acting, likewise, as agent for Broglie, the chief of the private royal secret service, "the King's Secret" as they called it. To watch, to listen, to find out what they were doing in America, to see how that revolution was coming along, to hasten its advent with cunning propaganda.

And since all these reports—all these extracts from gazettes, all these pamphlets and memoranda, all the harvest of that daily attention to British-American affairs—must be sorted, and sifted, and translated, he had, as early as 1759, reorganized the Bureau of Interpreters attached to his Ministry at Versailles, enlarged it by incorporating with it certain sections of the Ministries of the Navy and War, and placed at its head as Clerk in Chief one of the secretaries of the old bureau. A gentleman in his early thirties, named Edmé Jacques Genet.

2

The Genets had long been dignified people, well connected, wealthy Burgundy landowners in 1500, come later upon less prosperous times as a result of many litigations. So that in 1702 the twelve year old Jean Genet had gone on foot to Paris to try his luck. It came to him in the establishment of the Duchess du Maine where he was employed, and where his participation in some theatrical performances attracted the benevolent notice of Cardinal Alberoni, whom, as secretary, he eventually accompanied to Spain. Jean Genet returned from Madrid with a fortune of four hundred

thousand *livres,* purchased himself a royal magistracy and married a "poor but noble" lady out of a convent. She gave him her gratitude, and two sons, Edmé Jacques and Pierre Michel; a sickly boy, the latter, who was to spend his days in retired bachelorhood upon a small estate near Paris, and become the beloved Uncle Toto of his brother's children—Toto from his additional, landed name of de Charmontot.

But if Pierre was a recluse, Edmé's young manhood had been agitated and adventurous. Jean Genet had absorbed notions of religious severity in Spain which made of him in his home an impossible martinet, a fanatic of endless lugubrious devotions. Edmé could not abide them, nor his father's harsh bigotry. A brilliant student in his boyhood, a lover of the classics and of history, and already a linguist of note, Edmé hoped to enter the career of diplomacy, and tried his pen at versification. Jean Genet, who had decided that he was to be a magistrate and who considered poetry an invention of the devil, threatened him with imprisonment in a monastery on a *lettre de cachet.* Edmé had found a lovely young lady, "beautiful and virtuous," Marie Anne Louise Cardon, whom he adored. Jean Genet flew into somber rages and advised him that a very rich wife had already been chosen for him. An extremely plain person, but no matter. None of this Louise Cardon, and none of this diplomacy. A respectable magistracy, and the plain lady with the ducats.

There were domestic scenes and furies, in which Edmé's mother took his part and tried to keep the peace. Edmé was only twenty, and under the French law he would not come of age for another five years. It was finally arranged that he was to travel, and he could stay away from home,

he was told, until he had given up all his ideas. Edmé went to see his Louise, exchanged vows of fidelity with her, and set out for Germany. Four years later he was in England, at Dover, boarding at the house of the Governor of the Castle, perfecting his English. Dover was very close to France. He slipped across one night, and to a friend's house in Paris. There his mother came to him, and they dressed him up as a priest and packed him off in a cab to go and see Louise. The next day he returned to Dover, and in a few months he was twenty-five.

He came back to Paris, found that his father would not receive him—although they were finally to be reconciled—drew official attention to his political essays on England, married Louise Cardon early in 1752, and in the spring of the following year was given his post in the Bureau of Interpreters. He was to spend the remainder of his life at Versailles, in great financial trouble at first, borrowing on his patrimony, but comfortably and influentially after Choiseul's intervention in his affairs in 1759—and especially when Louis XV became aware of his existence, as the result of a very fine report on the British Navy which he prepared from materials gathered by him during a sojourn in England, ostensibly as councillor to the French embassy, in 1762.

A gentleman, who, along with all the languages of Europe, spoke English fluently, had lived in the hateful island and understood its affairs, was in a position to observe faithfully the progress of events in America. Just what Choiseul wanted. A Clerk in Chief who could answer anything he was asked, industrious, full of zeal, intelligent, beholden for his well being to the ministerial favor. A

curator of facts concerning England and America, and a disciple of his benefactor's policies.

And in the meantime, at home with Louise, there had been children. Eight of them in nine years. Two sons who had both died in infancy, and six daughters only four of whom survived. Jeanne Louise Henriette, the first born of them all, Julie Françoise, Adelaïde Henriette and Anne Glaphire Sophie, a year old in 1762. And now, towards the close of that year, they were awaiting another child. They hoped very much that it would be a boy. Their last child, as it turned out. He was born on January 8, 1763, and christened in the parish of St. Louis of Versailles, Edmond Charles Genet.

3

They had prayed very hard to have the child a boy, and just at Christmas of 1762 Louise Genet had had a dream. The Virgin had appeared to her, bringing a lovely boy in a white cradle. And Louise Genet had vowed that if it should be so, she would dress her little son all in white for the first five years of his life. It was so, and not until his sixth birthday did Edmond Charles lay aside the little white suits, the white shoes and the white hats with which his pious mother had filled his wardrobe. A little boy in white, in a great house filled with girls, on one of the cavernous streets of solemn Versailles. White, the Virgin's color, although he was never to be very devout. White, the royal color, although he was one day to renounce it.

A little boy in white who, in 1769, could read French and English, and stand up in his father's salon and recite Greek roots. And sing little songs. Very much petted by

his sisters and all the company. A good looking little boy, full of spirit, with red hair and blue eyes. A year later there were two tutors for him, Mr. Lindblom from Sweden who instructed him in modern languages, and the Abbé Gateschi from Tuscany who taught him the classics. From his father he learned history and law—the history of France and the history of England according to Choiseul—and, as the years accumulated, riding, fencing, dancing and the use of the piano-forte were added to his accomplishments. He played very nicely, and always sang agreeably, and he was very fond of flowers, spending long hours in his father's garden in which he was to amuse himself later planting American shrubs and trees. In 1773 he was writing letters in Greek to one of his father's friends, Villoison, the celebrated classical scholar.

"A charming letter," Villoison said of the first one, "revealing a profound knowledge of Greek. It will always be very dear to me because it is extremely well written in a tongue which is my delight." Villoison had not been certain whether the letter was from the father or from the son, but an acquaintance had identified it as the son's, "which doubled my astonishment." And in 1776, when Edmond Charles was away at Strasburg studying, Villoison was urging him to proceed with his Greek.

And in 1777 the fourteen year old boy had translated the *History of Eric XIV* from Swedish into French; the work had been published and a copy presented to the King and Queen, another to the Academy of Inscriptions and Fine Letters, and still another to the King of Sweden who sent a beautiful gold medal to the translator; and Villoison could not think of enough things to say.

THE GENET HEIRLOOM

The hair of Marie Antoinette, Queen of France, and of her son, the Dauphin, later Louis XVII. Presented, with the frame, by the Queen to Madame Campan, and by the latter to her brother, Citizen Genet. Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the possession of Citizen Genet's grand-daughter.

The Academy, he wrote, had received it with interest and admiration "when it became aware of your age, of your industry, of the happy expectations that you give us . . . [and] of the engagements that you are making with the republic of letters, the fine project that you have in mind of illuminating the literature of the North, of unravelling the chaos of its legends and of its history, of bringing forth every month some work on that subject. . . . The most splendid career, Sir, opens before your eyes; you already progress in it with gigantic footsteps, and one may say to you with more justice than to any other that you are beginning where others finish, because at the tenderest age you have exclusive acquaintance with a precious and interesting literature which is completely unknown to other *savants*. . . . The mountains of ice and of snow which forbid access to it to other literary men . . . are levelled for you and become . . . a fertile field . . . where you will make a harvest of glory. . . . As for me, reduced to admiring you without being able to imitate you, I will give myself a real pleasure in boasting of your successes."

They were to make him a member of the Academy of Sciences, and of learned societies in Stockholm and Upsala —for his translation, in 1778, of the *Researches concerning the Ancient Finnish Race*—and later on of the Royal Society of Medicine of Paris, and of the Royal Antiquarian Society of London; but what had pleased him most, perhaps, was his presentation in person of his History to Voltaire. The great man was very ill—he died in May, 1778—and he had been forbidden to speak, but "he received my present very kindly, and expressed by signs that he considered it an interesting historical document." Yes.

What is perhaps more interesting is that Edmond Charles had been taken to the house by a relative of his father's, someone from the old home in Burgundy, a personage who, accepted everywhere in 1778 as a woman, had enjoyed a romantic reputation as a soldier, a diplomat and a former agent of the "King's Secret" of Louis XV. The Chevalier d'Eon. And the invalid Voltaire could only make signs to the young author, but he could not resist speaking aloud to the Chevalier, telling her that "your history would have been much more interesting than that of my Joan [of Arc] for you have rendered much more illustrious service to your sex and to France than she."

4

There was always to be a great deal of mystery about this Chevalier who at one time had fought in the wars and served at embassies in masculine dress, and at other times had been seen in female garments. In London they had been making prodigious bets as to the sex of Eon, then appearing as a woman; and it was only recently that the Chevalier had returned to Paris, from exile, under royal orders to continue henceforth to wear only woman's clothes. Another great mystery at the time.

But it was no great mystery to those who were in the know. Eon, by special permission of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was living with the Genets, enjoying in particular the hospitality of their country place at Montreuil, where, "notwithstanding the injunction not to wear men's clothes, we [the Chevalier and Edmond Charles] had to-

gether many hunting parties in which she [wore] that dress." And to Edmond Charles she gave her version of the mystery.

It was her parents who, anticipating no more children, had determined to bring her up as a boy, imparting the hoax to the Duke de Broglie who was "very much amused at the idea" and eventually introduced the Chevalier—already then a distinguished officer in the Dragoons—to the other Broglie who was chief of the "King's Secret." It was then that they had sent her, as a woman, on a secret mission to Russia. There followed a diplomatic and secret service career, in male capacity once more, as the result of which a fearful quarrel with a French ambassador sent the Chevalier into exile in England, still in possession of some of the ambassador's drafts of dispatches. The thing had made a great stir in the days of Louis XV—the dispatches had to do with the "King's Secret"—and Louis XVI had finally sent an emissary to treat with the Chevalier and secure the papers.

It was "the famous Caron de Beaumarchais"—he will appear again in these pages—"partly a spy, partly an agent and partly a writer for the French Government," who went to London and was said to have closed the deal. But according to the Chevalier's account to Edmond Charles, she had had nothing to do with him, "being indignant at a proposition he had the infamy to make to her, which was to divulge to him her sex and [thereby] enable him . . . to make bets thereon, the proceeds of which he promised to divide with her." And the Chevalier had gone "to her armoury [where] she took a pistol . . . and a cane . . . and, having given [Beaumarchais] the most severe flogging, turned him out of doors [with] these few words: Learn, rascal, that it is thus

that the Chevalier d'Eon reveals his or her sex, and you can bet on that."

Eon had arranged matters in person with the King's Ministers; and as for the order to appear in woman's clothes, it was simply to protect Eon from the vengeance she might, as a man, have expected from the sons of the ambassador whom she had insulted. Or to protect the sons—the point is not quite clear—from the necessity of challenging a man, for the Chevalier was a celebrated duellist.

That was the story told in the Genet household—but upon Eon's death, in London, there was a great rush of surgeons to perform autopsies, and while the encyclopedias proclaim her to have been a man, Edmond Charles was in his later days to be more explicit concerning the neutral character of the Chevalier's sex. At all events, the bets were never paid.

5

Edmond Charles was fifteen, he spoke Latin, Greek, Italian, Swedish, German and English, he received gold medals from kings and signs of approbation from Voltaire. "May you profit for a long time, and with full sails," someone wrote to him, "from all the advantages of which you are so worthy."

But it had not been all Greek and Swedish, tutors, and translations, and gold medals. There were playmates, sons of his father's intimates, young Girard and young Bournonville, and Versailles was full of the impudent clatterwhacking of pages. Boys in white.

And summer days when the whole family went rolling out, bag and baggage, to visit Uncle Toto at his country

retreat at Mainville. Woods, and birds, and cows, and a great romping, after the solemnities at Versailles; and in the evening Uncle Toto with his flute, playing *Charming Gabrielle* and *My Merry Shepherd.* And Uncle Toto himself, so fond of his scampering nephew; such a simple, absent minded, gentle old soul; so removed from the world that he was to find it necessary, in 1793, to write to one of his nieces and ask her "Just exactly what is the Revolution? Why all this uproar? For what reason are all these people being put to death?"

And at home, in the decorous, unpretentiously genteel house at Versailles, there was gaiety, and music, and conversation—a continual *musique de chambre* echo of the louder orchestral grandeurs of the royal Chateau—the dignified commerce of erudition and scholarly intercourse. The letters from Villoison, for instance.

A young man, only thirteen years older than Edmond Charles, an amazingly industrious *savant,* a writer of endless epistles filled with the minute vicissitudes and triumphs of research, a person of importance in his world of Greek and classical antiquities—remembered now for his edition of the *Iliad* based on the celebrated *Codex Venetus* manuscript found by him in the Library of St. Marc at Venice—a very vain gentleman, a fearful snob and an envious solicitor of financial favors who knew to the last *sou* the amount of every pension enjoyed by his more fortunate and less deserving colleagues. He was always "the least fortunate member of the Academy, one of those who has worked the most, and the only one who has no position, no pension from the Court." He had several pensions, as a matter of fact, procured for him by the Genets, father and son, but he was

never satisfied. "Here," in 1783, "is poor d'Alembert dead yesterday; death releases many pensions. . . ."

He was in Venice in 1778, finding his famous manuscript —"my excellent Homer manuscript . . . written in letters as small as a pin head, and which . . . will make a sensation in Greek literature and endure as long as Homer"—and he was having a very good time among the nobles in that city where "one hardly ever goes to bed." He could boast of "a very great number of warm, sincere and ardent friends among the nobility of both sexes." There was no other country where one could find "such fine Greek manuscripts and so many eloquent and beautiful women."

Mr. Lindblom had sent a Lapp down to him, and Villoison could not satisfy "the eagerness of the ladies to see my Lapp. . . . I took him . . . to a house where I spend every evening until an hour after midnight, and where are gathered the foremost members of the Republic and the most beautiful women of Venice. He was feted there, welcomed by the heads of the Council of Ten, by the Senators." And with it all Villoison was working hard. "You will be surprised," in 1779, "to learn that when I leave Venice I shall have copied almost five thousand letter sheets of Greek." But it took him another whole year, and now there was a young Englishman, twenty years old, who owned two thirds of Jamaica, and who possessed "a lively taste for study, a rare and astonishing knowledge of Greek, Arabic, Persian and all the modern languages, an unbelievable talent for music and drawing." What extraordinary young men they all were.

The correspondence went on after Edmé Genet's death. In 1782, Villoison was at Weimar, in Germany, and the

Duke of Saxe-Weimar was so kind. "In spite of the extreme and immense difference in rank, he deigns to treat me as a friend." And so did the Duchess and the Dowager Duchess. "They have obliged me to sit for my bust which in spite of me they intend to place in their palace and in all their country houses." And the Court of Weimar was a center for all the greatest men in Germany. "Mr. Wieland, the greatest poet in Germany, perhaps in Europe if he had only written in French . . . and especially a good philosopher and Greek scholar, two qualities which Voltaire certainly did not possess . . . Mr. Goethe . . . author of some excellent dramas." In fact, "this Court is an academy . . . at table one only speaks French. . . . The Duchess spends all her time alone reading and studying. . . . Ever since my arrival the Dowager Duchess has given herself up to the study of Greek with all the zeal, all the courage and heroism of her House of Brunswick. . . . It is I who have inspired this passion which will soon become an epidemic at the Court." One begins to see him quite clearly in this letter.

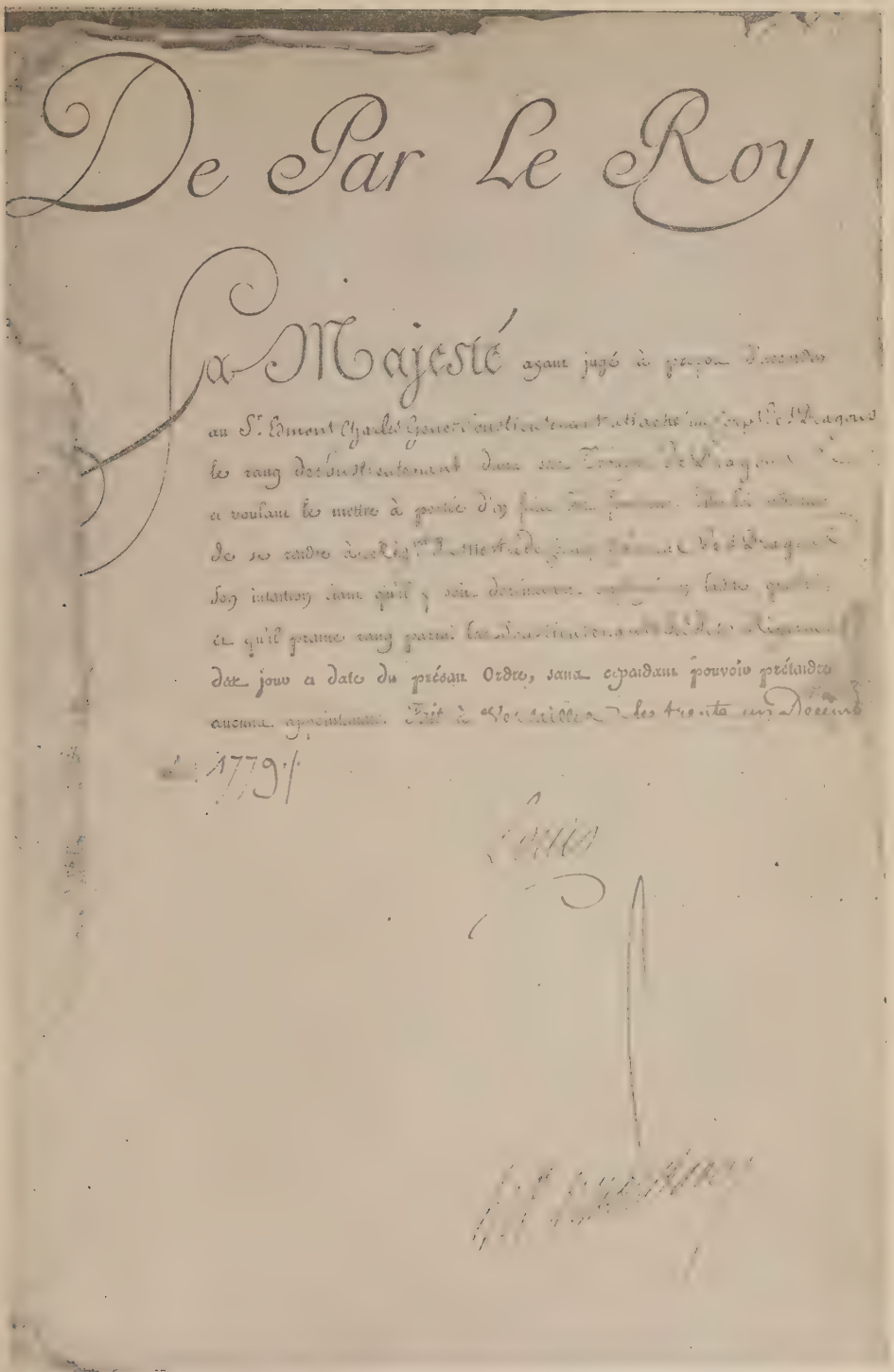
And then in 1783 they were talking of sending him to Mount Athos, in Greece, to visit the monasteries, and he did not want to go. There was going to be war out there, and he was in a panic of fear. Instead, he wanted to go to Rome. His letters to Edmond Charles cried to Heaven.

The very idea of such a voyage "makes me shudder and congeals me with horror." He could undertake it "only by *lettre de cachet* from the King, and then I would look upon that fatal order as my death sentence, very certain . . . that I would lose my life there along with the King's money which I could utilize so usefully and so gloriously in Rome." He had always told Genet that "in spite of my ardent desire

to fly to Mount Athos, I could not go there if there was the slightest indication of war. I would not be master of my fright, and I could not preserve the calm necessary for an examination of all those manuscripts within sight of three armies . . . I am too much afraid of the fury of the Turks, the barbarity of the Russians and the perfidy of the Greeks." Everyone was telling him not to go, his mother and his wife were having insomnia over it. He would only be taken for a spy and suffer horrible torments. "The Greeks would be the first to sell me and betray me. Let me go to Rome." There were great discoveries to be made at the Vatican, magnificent discoveries. Rome was the place. Now in Rome—

But they refused to send him to Rome. He must go to Mount Athos, and the letters began again. He was in a "horrible agitation." It was certain death, in the presence of those three armies, threatened with a fearful carnage, a prey to "a perpetual fear lest the Turks, driven from Salonica, should seek refuge on Mount Athos and entrench themselves in those twenty-two monasteries." He would be robbed, and "alone, abandoned on Mount Athos, what would become of me?" The Greeks would never believe that it was only a love of literature which had brought him to the seat of a fearful war, "especially as the Turks are convinced that the treasure, the crown and the secrets of the last Emperors of Constantinople are buried at Mount Athos."

No, no. The Turks were going to slaughter everybody, especially the French. And even if he escaped there would be no way home. "The land and the sea would be infested with brigands and corsairs." Villoison was very much ashamed, but the voyage was impossible. Certain death.



De Par Le Roy

La Majesté ayant jugé à propos d'accorder au Sr. Edmont Charles Genet Soustieutenant attaché au Corps de Dragons le rang de Soustieutenant dans son Troupe de Dragons et voulant le mettre à portée d'en faire les fonctions [illegible] de se rendre à ce Régt. [illegible] Son intention étant qu'il y soit [illegible] et qu'il prenne rang parmi les Soustieutenants [illegible] des jour et date du présent Ordre, sans cependant pouvoir prétendre aucuns appointements. Fait à Versailles le trente un Décembre 1779.

Louis

GENET'S COMMISSION IN THE DRAGOONS

Signed by the King, Louis XVI, countersigned by Montbarey, Minister of War. Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the possession of the Library of Congress.

And anyway, the monks would probably not allow him to see the manuscripts. No. It was much better to go to Rome. The Vatican, that was the place. Ah, the Vatican! Now in the Vatican—

But they insisted on his going to Mount Athos. And in the meantime the Abbé des Annays was saying that there were no manuscripts at all on Mount Athos. They had all been taken to Russia long since. Edmond Charles thought it unlikely, and was certain that Villoison would be able to find access "to those twenty-two libraries which [the Abbé] imagines were clandestinely removed by the Russians . . . without the six thousand monks who guard them being informed of it." And Villoison himself was very angry. It was perfectly well known that the Russians had not carried away a single sheet of paper from Mount Athos. Such an idea had never occurred to them. The Abbé was "the most false and the most rampant man that I know." And a very dangerous man. He had many times spoken to Villoison of a scheme to send a fellow to Moscow "who should get the Russian librarian drunk and steal from him his beautiful Greek manuscripts." This idea, Villoison wrote, was horrible, and "only a scoundrel would run the risk of getting himself hung in Russia."

And finally, in 1785, Villoison went to Mount Athos, and there was nothing there of any importance. He wrote "all covered with the dust of seven or eight thousand Greek manuscripts which I have just examined . . . I have been through the twenty monasteries . . . [they] contain a great number of very ancient and beautifully written Greek manuscripts. . . . Unfortunately, Sir, they are only Bibles and liturgical works. . . . I have seen all the relics, all the

towers, the cellar, the attic. I wanted to know thoroughly this singular spot, this confederated republic of twenty monasteries the capital of which is the only town in the world where nothing is born, where there are no women, not a single animal female, no more than everywhere else on the holy mountain."

Now in Rome—

6

Edmé Genet was not a handsome man—Edmond Charles had his attractive looks from his mother—but the elder was a man of elegance and wit, a distinguished linguist and scholar. A man of spirit, devoted to his duties, frugal, paternal, and estimable. Everywhere in the land other men bearing the most distinguished names in the kingdom were glad to receive his treatises and translations on politics, on finance, on commerce—the commerce of England and America—and to write to him for advice, to comment on his "rare talent for languages and taste for letters," to assure him repeatedly of their affection and respect. Dukes, Ministers, Marshals, Cardinals—Bernis, Soubise, Luynes, Broglie, Noailles, Chevreuse—the signatures on his correspondence formed a roster of France.

And at home his salon was the meeting place for all the learned and artistic world of Versailles—almost a counterpart of the Countess d'Angevilliers', a pupil of Madame de Pompadour and his very great friend—a haven for every traveller of scholarly distinction from foreign countries. There one heard recitations, and concerts, and philosophical discussions in many tongues; a constant setting forth of seemly matters in the midst of a continuous passing to and

fro of stately personages, under the brilliant glow of many candles. And always a word for the boy in white, for "Monsieur your son" the translator. And all the gossip of the Court. "The Queen is not pregnant, but perhaps Compiègne will do the trick." Little royal intimacies of that nature. For all the daughters of the house were eventually at the Palace, gathered around the Austrian lady who was first Dauphine and then Queen.

Henriette, the oldest, had been the first to go, when, in 1768, her declamation of French poetry, her knowledge of English and Italian, her proficiency on the guitar, the pianoforte and the harp, had induced the Duchess de Choiseul to have her named Reader to Mesdames, the unmarried daughters of Louis XV. Then, in 1770, the fifteen year old Marie Antoinette had come from Vienna to marry the awkward Louis. Henriette was only a year or two older; the two girls "made" music together and became close friends. And when in 1774 the Dauphine became Queen, she arranged a fine marriage for her Henriette with Mr. Campan, the son of her secretary—only the marriage did not turn out so well, for Mr. Campan had already been a widower at twenty, and he was not in the least interested in Henriette and told her so, departing a few months later for Italy—and Madame Campan found herself First Lady of the Bedchamber and Keeper of the Queen's Moneys, with an income of sixty thousand *livres* and all the candles set out every evening in the Queen's apartments as her particular perquisite.

Julie was the next. The lively Julie who was so especially fond of Edmond Charles; Julie who would not study, but who was very witty and whom Albanese of Naples taught to sing divinely. They married her in 1771 to Mr.

Rousseau, Chamberlain to the Countess d'Artois, Cloak Carrier to the King, Fencing Master, later, to the Children of France. They were to guillotine him for it all during the Revolution. "The best looking man in Versailles" and "the prettiest girl." Louis XV himself had a look, and said that he had never seen so handsome a pair. And when the Children of France began to come, they promoted the pretty girl with the lovely voice to be Cradle Rocker to Madame Royale, to the first Dauphin who died in the Palace, and to the second Dauphin who perhaps did not die in the prison of the Temple.

Then Adelaïde, who was very beautiful too, and who became one of the Queen's favorite ladies in waiting, so that Their Majesties acted as godparents to her daughter, after her marriage, under royal patronage, to Mr. Auguié; a gentleman who was Quartermaster General of the Army, Receiver General of Finances—when there were any—and Receiver of the Duchies of Bar and Lorraine. And last of all, Sophie, who was to be Lady in Waiting to Madame Royale.

And Edmond Charles himself was at Court, in 1777 when he was fourteen, as Interpreter to "Monsieur," Louis XVIII to be. A post which gave him "entry to the chamber," or in other words access to the bedrooms and private studies of the Princes—Monsieur and Artois, the King's brothers—"and the advantage of conversing with them in English and Italian." Louis XVI was mildly aware of him, and the Queen very sentimentally gracious. Her Henriette's, her Julie's, her Adelaïde's young brother. They often talked of him in the seclusion of Her Majesty's domestic moments, and the Queen always wanted to be informed

of all his little adventures. The royal gaze was frequently upon him, and there was a future for him at Versailles—except that there was very little future left for any of them at Versailles. But in 1777 the little grottoes of Trianon had heard no whisper of the future, only the piping of noble shepherds, the caroling of royal milkmaids.

There they all were, "reunited at the feet of the Queen" as Villoison expressed it; four girls highly placed in the *Service de la Reine,* cherishing the privilege of her bountiful friendship, and the boy who did not have to wait outside the private doors of the Princes of the Blood. A tradition of service, of loyalty to the Crown established in that family, sprung from an unalterable sense of gratitude, of intimate affection, of intense personal devotion. The lady who held the Queen's purse; the young woman who was to sing the Children to sleep, Marie Thérèse, Louis Joseph, Louis Charles—"Charlot." Edmond Charles grew up in that tradition, never dreaming that a day was coming—not so very far away now—when he must make a very grave decision.

7

But first he had many roads to travel.

They put him, at fourteen, in his father's bureau, and there at once he began to learn the machinery of statecraft, the dialect of politics, the vocabulary of diplomacy. In that bureau which was the mill to which came all the grist of foreign affairs, all the news of the world, all the gossip of ambassadors and the whisperings of spies, to issue forth again all carefully translated in daily memoranda to Vergennes—Choiseul had gone, and it was the other who came now to the Minister's desk, sometimes at four in the morn-

ing—in little special notes to this or that official, in long reports for one Ministry or another.

On commerce, many of them, the commerce of England and America, and the advantages to France should the trade of the American colonies be diverted from England. The balance of power, commerce and America. They were very busy with that in 1777; they had been studying the subject for years; it was one of Edmé Genet's favorite topics, one that he could never spend too much time on, one that he could never cease placing under Vergennes's eyes, along with his detailed study of the English dealings with the colonies which had finally resulted in the rebellion. For Choiseul's revolution had come; there were Commissioners in Paris from America looking for help—something more than the secret contrivances of Hortalez and Company—Mr. Deane, and Mr. Lee, and that Doctor Franklin who had simply taken the town by storm; they were fighting over there; a man called Washington was in command of the rebels.

They remembered him well enough in France, those who were not too young. The Englishman who had murdered Jumonville and his party in 1754—slaughtered him with his men, so all the evidence had shown to French minds, as the others were approaching with a message. The Englishman who by that deed of blood, the furious condemnation of which had resounded through France, had brought on the long war with England that had finally lost Canada. Edmé Genet could remember, only three or four years after he had joined the old Bureau of Interpreters. They had published all the reports, and a translation of the Englishman's captured journal. Major Washington. But no matter.

He was a general now, commanding the rebels, doing harm to England the eternal enemy. He ought to be helped, because it would be profitable commercially for France. Edmé Genet was convinced of it, and kept pressing his convictions on his chief, Vergennes, supporting them with laboriously compiled statistics.

Edmond Charles knew all about this work; he learned to attach a meaning to strange names, the Kentucky, the Illinois, the Mississippi; he browsed around and became familiar with many notable matters. The close of that long war of seven years, the reports of agents at The Hague in 1762 and the condensations of Cossin's News Sheet—all manner of items, politics, war, peace, scandal from all over Europe and even far away India. The revolution in Russia. The seizure of the throne by Catherine II; the death of her husband, that Czar Peter III who "had no regard for the Empress his wife, and who gave all his attention to a sultana of long standing;" that death in prison from an alleged attack of colic, concerning which "it is difficult to persuade oneself that this death can be natural, and one suspects that a certain beverage may well have shortened his career." A report which "only Cossin would have dared to write." But he wrote about everything, including Madame de Pompadour.

And the great file on the British navy, another of Edmé Genet's specialties. There were spies and renegades everywhere, and it is from the report of one of these, published in England in 1779 and sent to Edmé Genet by Villoison, that a probably very exact description of it may be obtained. "I knew of a contrivance," the agent wrote, "invented by a clerk at Foreign Affairs, by means of which he knows day

by day . . . the slightest movements that we make . . . and with the greatest ease. . . . He has an enormous cabinet, divided and subdivided into an infinity of drawers, classified and labeled in rows." The movements of every vessel were taken from the English gazettes and filed in dry dock, in port—a drawer for each port—at sea—a section for each portion of the British dominions. Everything up to date, down to the last marine aboard. The work was "more useful than that of mercenary traitors who could only operate under cover and timidly in the enemy's country. . . . He was in a position to correct the reports of all the spies employed by his own Government."

A statement substantiated by Edmé Genet himself when he wrote to Vergennes concerning naval intelligence that he could assure him that "I have never learned anything from secret agents; that as a matter of fact I have often corrected them; and that their only merit when they reported the truth was to corroborate the accuracy of my own system."

The British navy and American commerce—Edmé Genet's two principal preoccupations—Edmond Charles busied himself with those affairs in that industrious place of many clerks, all of whom must speak at least one foreign language, where all day they sat patiently with pens filling double sheets of large, crisp, watermarked paper with the monotonously perfect handwriting of an unending routine.

When he was not at Passy with his father, waiting upon the American Commissioners, Mr. Deane, Mr. Lee and Mr. Franklin, where "I was treated with much kindness by the venerable Doctor."

CHAPTER II

SECRET SERVICE

1

THE woods were full of American Commissioners. In 1776 already, and straight through until the peace, in 1783. Commercial agents, diplomatic agents of the Congressional Committee of Secret Correspondence, Commissioners to France, Commissioners to Spain, Commissioners to Holland, to Austria, to Prussia, to Tuscany. Commissioners who pestered, Commissioners who quarrelled, Commissioners who went off in a huff, Commissioners who could not secure admittance into the countries to which they were commissioned. And a swarm of spies buzzing around them like gnats; French spies, Spanish spies, British spies, ambassadors' spies, Commissioners' spies, all spying on the Commissioners and on each other. They watched all that in Edmé Genet's bureau, and did some spying of their own to match Lord Stormont's at the British Embassy.

It is not the purpose in these pages to recount the formal history of the American negotiations with Europe during the Revolution; but one must glance at some of the personalities, inspect some of their activities, for their correspondence filled

Edmé Genet's mail, the translations of their communications was his frequent task, and association with them on his part —and for a while on Edmond Charles's—a common occurrence. It was the boy's first contact with America, with that new thing that was happening over there—that captivating notion of freedom and equality which was being established, written down by a man called Jefferson in splendid, glittering words that sounded like a page from Rousseau—and if the tortuous diplomacy of it all was not for him to understand, still he knew those American gentlemen, he had shaken hands with them at Passy, Doctor Franklin had patted him on the head and given him work to do; he was completely thrilled by the frenzy of enthusiam with which France had welcomed the old gentleman in the fur cap, named dishes and head-dresses after him, put his portrait in jewelled brooches and gone yelling after his carriage from Nantes to Paris.

The irony of it all, the prophetic significance of it, had not occurred to any of them. This uproarious popular espousal, this fashionable aristocratic tolerance of the cause of revolt. This rushing off of gay young blades, La Fayette and his coroneted companions, waving swords for freedom—although of course what they were really doing was taking a pass at England. This passion for uprisen America which caused Edmond Charles's sister, Madame Campan, to receive "letters written by gentlemen attached to the Court who sealed [them] with a seal upon which glittered the thirteen stars of the Union surrounding the word Liberty." The Queen's own partiality to "our dear Republicans." But it sufficed then that these gentlemen were Americans, and that their enemy was England, and on their lips the

word Liberty had a lovely sound, a philosophical charm. And what a wonderful place it must be, America.

2

But quietly, in Vergennes's office and around Edmé Genet's desk, away from the tumult, they saw the thing a little more widely. Vergennes himself, and his agents and subordinates—Beaumarchais and Garnier, Hennin, Gérard and Edmé Genet.

To see that England—they had always seen that—that England was the hereditary enemy of France, "an enemy at once grasping, ambitious, unjust and perfidious," as he told Louis XVI, the reducing of whose power and greatness was a "duty" imposed on France. That France herself, "placed in the center of Europe, has the right to influence all great affairs," and that "her king . . . is entitled to regard his throne as a tribunal set up by Providence." That France must always be the first State in Europe, rich in prestige, preponderating in influence—that was History. That ever since the close of the Seven Years' War, ever since the loss of Canada, ever since the first partition of Poland in 1772 when France had not even been *consulted*—had not even known of it beforehand in spite of the "King's Secret" and all its agents—that all during these recent years this position, this prestige, this influence had dwindled and evaporated, had ceased to be History. That they must be restored. That this could be accomplished only by injuring England in every way. That an excellent way would be to give aid to her revolted colonists. Secret aid without endangering France's neutral relations with England, official aid if Spain could be induced to join. Navies to

strike at England, at her own prestige, at her ships, at her commerce.

There was the policy. In order to persuade the King it was to be dressed up in various alarming costumes—an inevitable attack from England after she had subdued the colonies; a fearful peril to the French West Indies; even that fantastic report by Beaumarchais of the threats of reprisals by a coalition of America reunited to England, alleged to have been made to him by Arthur Lee, the first of the intriguing secret agents, in the event of a French failure to assist the colonies—but the real policy was the restoration of French prestige, the aggrandizement of her commerce, through the "enfeeblement" of England in any way. By means of the Americans, if that was a good way. As for the Americans themselves, and their little hopes and struggles, that was all very fine. They would get something out of it too. Independence perhaps. Yes, independence —what a blow to England! Vergennes's agents, Bonvouloir and the others, all talked independence. But not too much independence, not too much territory. Not too powerful.

No attempt need be made in these pages to report the historically well known processes by means of which the King's consent was finally obtained for French secret aid to the colonies, and for the eventual open treaties of commerce and alliance of 1778. Long processes, because, as Vergennes saw it, "the time for giving the Americans aid depends on their success," but already before he had heard of Saratoga he was preparing for the final steps, and after Saratoga he was convinced that "the Power that will first recognize the independence of the Americans will be the one

that will reap the fruits of this war." The American Commissioners came to Versailles, and names were signed to parchments promising certain things "forever." Edmond Charles was later to have occasion to recall them.

It was Edmé Genet who had received the express bringing the English papers announcing the capture of Burgoyne, and who had translated the news and carried it to Vergennes "who did not lose an instant in laying the details of that great event before the King [at Fontainebleau]. It created a great and agreeable sensation at Court," and Lord Stormont withdrew, "much to the regret of Lady Stormont, who, it was reported by the Queen to . . . Madame Campan, did not leave that place without shedding tears." And the day before, there had been a scene at Edmé Genet's house, where the Chaplain of the British Embassy, Dr. Maltby, was dining with another Englishman, a Whig called Whitfield who gave everybody English lessons. For when Dr. Maltby had praised "the paternal and domestic virtues" of George III, Whitfield had replied that "I admit that your King is a good father, a good husband and perhaps a good friend, but in politics he is a tyrant and a fool." And Dr. Maltby had jumped up in a rage and left the house.

And in America they were just a little surprised. They had not expected an alliance. Treaties of amity and commerce, but not an alliance exactly. It went against the grain a bit, instinctively, after all those bygone years of Indian fighting. The Old French War, all that. An alliance with the "capering" dancing masters. The people who had tried to accuse General Washington of having murdered Jumonville, back in 1754, when everyone who could remember

knew that Jumonville had come spying with his men. The loyalists, of course, made a great noise over it. "The frog eating gentry." And Beaumarchais's agent in America, a Frenchman, had something to say about it. All persons of English blood, he wrote, "have against us a prejudice, a national contempt which must filter through many years . . . before another sentiment can occupy their hearts. . . . The people generally regard the Frenchman as a degenerate being, as an animal of the second order, unworthy to be compared with them. With very slight modifications this is the view of most Americans." The "sound part of the nation" welcomed the news "with transports of joy," but "I shall never believe in there ever being that union of interests between us with which they flatter themselves. The treaty pleased them because it insures their independence."

And away off in Russia, when he heard of it, Count Osterman thought of something else, and looked into the future, and remarked to the French Ambassador that "I hope the King your master may not have cause to regret having assisted the insurrection of the English colonies; but I very much fear lest by that action he may have severed for all nations the bond of loyalty, lightened the yoke of submission, and turn out to be the first victim of the ideas of independence and liberty which modern philosophy has propagated already too widely."

The first victim of independence and liberty. No, they had not thought of that at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs while they listened to the schemes of Beaumarchais for supplying the colonies with arms—Beaumarchais who was very soon to write the comedy which can almost be said to have started the French Revolution. Although there

was to be a strong reaction against all this enthusiasm for independence and rebellion; a court cabal against Vergennes's policy; and disagreeable pamphlets, such as "The History of a French Louse."

3

A tortuous business, all of it, which had the Commissioners, and Congress, and successive French and American Governments in a maze of misunderstandings and counterclaims, none of them simplified at the time by the embroilments of Arthur Lee and Silas Deane, or by the gyrations performed by Vergennes in order to preserve as long as possible his pretense of neutrality in the presence of Lord Stormont's excessively nosy spies. A business many of the details, many of the echoes of which passed through Edmé Genet's bureau.

That "Mr. Jones," who was Silas Deane dealing with Beaumarchais, and who could hardly speak a word of French. That other Jones, John Paul Jones, who came along later and filled the bureau with translations of his accusations of fraud and his complaints about the prize money due to the crew of his *Bonhomme Richard;* who wrote to Edmé Genet "to send me the explanation of all the devices on the sword [of honor] I have received," and who called him "my dear friend" and "my good friend" in official communications until the Clerk in Chief finally remarked in the margin of one of them that "while Mr. Genet shares everyone's esteem for Captain Jones, he begs leave to observe at this point that it is only for the good of the service and by order of the Ministers that he is on intimate terms with that American officer; and to insist that far from espousing his cause [of complaint]

he does not even claim to understand it very well, not knowing the arguments of the other side, and is only concerned with a faithful translation."

And this in spite of the fact, recorded by Mr. Russell in his biography of John Paul Jones, that Madame Campan belonged to that "adoptive" female freemason lodge which numbered among its members the Duchess de Chartres, the Countess de Polignac and the Princess de Lamballe, and which contributed to the purchase of the ship *Monsieur* for Captain Jones. Only Mr. Russell, confusing the generations, will have it that Madame Campan's father was the Mr. "de" Genet who became Minister to the United States, whereas that particular Mr. Genet, without any *de*, was of course her brother. A confusion subscribed to, also, by Mr. Faÿ—in his remarkable volume on *The Revolutionary Spirit in France and America*—when he calls the Minister to the United States Edmé Genet, and speaks of him as the *nephew* of Madame Campan.

He was enormously popular, this "Poljones;" there was "a crowd everywhere to see him go by," and "he is especially idolized by the women, but he is not unresponsive to it." He was frequently in and out of the Genet house, and a great favorite with the girls, for whom he once composed an impromptu poem, admiringly transcribed for Edmond Charles.

"Insulted freedom bled: I felt her cause,
And drew my sword to vindicate her laws
From principle, and not for vain applause.
I've done my best, self-interest far apart,
And self-reproach a stranger to my heart.
My zeal still prompts, ambitious to pursue

Mgr de Sartine

I trust your Excellency will excuse my Zeal for the success of the operations of France against Great Britain in the present conjuncture, as the contest on both sides seems to be confin'd chiefly to the Marine, a department that is so very ably directed by your Excellency. I think it incumbent on me to mention that I know a person in England who is compleatly qualified from his abilities & his good opportunities of getting quick & sure information of the secret determinations of the British Cabinet.

If it —

WILLIAM LEE TO SARTINES, MINISTER OF MARINE

Proposing secret service against England. Now reproduced in facsimile for the first time from the original in the Genet papers.

If it is agreeable, I will try to make this person of use to you.

I would propose to write to him as from myself, that I much wish to have accurate & speedy intelligence of what passes in the British Cabinet relative either to France or America, or both — if he will undertake this & execute what he engages to do, punctually, speedily and satisfactorily he may rely on my gratitude as far as One thousand Guineas a year, & in the mean time as a proof of my sincerity on the receit of his first Letter

I will

will return him One Hundred Guineas.

That on extraordinary occasions he may send an Express – the expence of which I will pay. If this plan is approved, a method should be pointed out to me, by which I may have any thing safely forwarded to you, by post, as on all occasions it may not be worth while to send an Express.

On the whole you will determine — whether the probable advantage will be worth the expence of the tryal.

I am perfectly sensible of the necessity of the strictest secrecy on such occasions therefore have not mentioned this to any other —

other person, for which reason shall hope to receive your Excellencies determination tomorrow, as after dinner I propose to set out on my Journey to Frankfort on the Maine, where it is probable I shall remain some time.

I shall be happy on all occasions of shewing with what singular respect

I am

Your Excellencies

Most Obliged and Obedient

Humble Servant

W. Lee

24 Sept. 1778 Paris
Hotel de Richelieu
Rue de Richelieu

The foes, ye fair, of liberty and you.
Grateful for praise, spontaneous and unbought,
A generous people's love, not meanly sought,
To merit this, and bend the knee to beauty,
Shall be my earliest and my latest duty."

And then that famous trading house of Rodriguez Hortalez and Company. They apparently knew all about that too in Edmé Genet's bureau, for there did not seem to be any secret letters, "for the King alone," copies of which did not find their way into that office. Beaumarchais and his wonderful schemes for supplying the colonies secretly, and at market price, with supplies obtained at cost from the royal arsenal, through the intermediary of an ostensibly private commercial concern. The money which was to be provided, as he suggested, not by the King at all, but by the English themselves, through a tax to be levied in French ports on "the enormous quantity of carriages and horses that curiosity, folly or commerce brings to us [from England]." An idea, the King must admit, which had "something piquant in it," and which should cause His Majesty "sweet pleasure."

The scheme itself, which furnished a means of "restraining or extending" aid, so that "this aid wisely administered *will serve less to bring the war between America and England to an end than to continue it and nourish it* to the great damage of the English." Yes. And as for neutrality, that was all taken care of by blaming everything on Deane, with his approval. "Follow that line," Beaumarchais wrote to his agent. "Now you know what to do. It is D—— who has done everything; he wrote to you . . . that he had conferred with me, although nothing of the sort occurred."

And they knew all about Beaumarchais himself, and his agent Théveneau de Francy. Beaumarchais, whose name was assumed—his real name was Caron—and whose patent of nobility had been purchased. Watchmaker, pamphleteer, playwright, musician—once music master to the daughters of Louis XV. Deprived of his civic rights for a while. Secret agent of Louis XV and later of Louis XVI. The man who had gone to London in 1774 to destroy a pamphlet attacking Madame du Barry, published by a certain Théveneau de Morande—and the other Théveneau was his brother—and entitled *Secret Memoirs of a Public Woman.* The man who had gone later to destroy another pamphlet attacking Marie Antoinette, a mission which had taken him melodramatically all over Europe and landed him for a time, ironically enough, in a Viennese prison. The man who had gone again to London on the affair of the Chevalier d'Eon. A marvellous fellow, full of deeds and words. *The Barber of Seville* and *The Marriage of Figaro.* And that ship of his called the *Hippopotamus,* which he promptly changed to the *Proud Roderigo.*

All these things were known, observed, filed away in Edmé Genet's bureau.

4

With the American Commissioners—Franklin, Adams, Izard—he was in constant contact, social and official, at Passy and at Versailles. Edmond Charles frequently accompanied him, and John Adams was to record that when Edmé Genet introduced the boy to him, in 1778, "he did not disguise that his utmost ambition would be gratified if his son should one day represent his country in the United

States." And when he formed that wish, Edmond Charles himself remarked long afterwards, he could not anticipate that "its accomplishment would terminate his son's career as a Frenchman;" any more than John Adams could foretell that he would one day be barricading his house in Philadelphia against the mobs stirred up by that same boy's arrival.

Some of Edmé Genet's correspondence with Adams has been published in *The Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States.* Additional items are to be found in the Genet papers. They disparaged false rumors of peace, and talked of the incompatibility of Anglo-American commercial interests which must cause "a perpetual rivalry and competition between England and America and a continual source of animosity and war." Adams told Genet that certain documents reporting the arming of Indians by Congress were forgeries and ought to be contradicted, "because [otherwise] these papers will be considered . . . as proofs that the Americans first engaged the savages to take an active part in the war . . . whereas nothing is further from the truth." They invited each other to sundry entertainments. They discussed "the art of political lying" as practised by the English, and Genet assured Adams on Vergennes's behalf that there was nothing in the alleged treaty between England and Russia.

Although Edmé Genet had then in his files a letter from one of his spies in Amsterdam desiring him "to inform the *Person* that I have information from London . . . from authority that is not to be disregarded which says the King . . . is endeavoring at, and hath made progress in, a treaty with Russia. The terms of Russia are thought exorbitant;

but the present determination is to accept them if they can't be amended." But then Edmé Genet seldom believed anything that secret agents told him.

With Franklin he and Edmond Charles both worked on the preparation of their extremely influential American propaganda news sheet for Europe called "Affairs of England and America," a most important publication concerning which Villoison wrote from Venice that "Cardinal Bentivoglio's niece . . . has showed me an excellent gazette on American affairs which she rightly makes a great fuss over . . . Senator Quirini has also said similar good things of your interesting paper. . . . The Imperial Ambassador also reads it with the same satisfaction." There was always a great traffic of gazettes in the office; two sets of English ones for Adams, "one on the court side of the question and the other on the country side;" and Franklin wanted "any intelligence [Genet] may have received from America, as likewise the gazettes that he can spare for twenty-four hours."

The bureau was a center of pro-American publicity inspired by Vergennes for the purpose of influencing public opinion in favor of his policy; supplying the official government press, controlled by the Ministry, with material; subsidizing foreign gazettes, such as the *Courier d'Europe* in which a certain Brissot, who will appear again, and the famous Théveneau de Morande were exercising their fiery pens; publishing pamphlets composed under Vergennes's eye, and circulating others forbidden by the censor because of their inflammatory character, but imported as articles into France by the service of propaganda.

There were plans, too, for a French news sheet in Ameri-

ca, on the order of the gazette projected in 1778 by two Boston printers, "for which they would rely principally upon articles from France capable of sustaining the union" of the two nations. "I felicitate myself," Genet wrote to Franklin, "for having conceived here an entirely similar project of which I have had the honor of speaking to you several times . . . I shall be infinitely flattered if [Vergennes's] final determination were based upon the suffrage of the honorable Plenipotentiaries and . . . the particular encouragement that you will deign to bestow upon it." Genet was himself to be the "chief of the enterprise." Everything in this gazette "shall be calculated to cement the union of the two countries [and] to excite industry and commerce between them to the highest degree possible." It was to be sold at cost in America, and "this shall be the only paper of its kind which will go out of France, the guaranty of which is the exclusive privilege which will be given to me."

And to Vergennes Genet explained that propaganda was necessary for the proper functioning of the new Franco-American treaty of commerce. "It is in this view that it has been determined to propose to *Monseigneur* the establishment of a periodical sheet in the English language . . . by means of which [the Americans] will be informed in their own tongue of the opportunity [and] the wants of the French market . . . this enterprise . . . would not have been . . . laid before *Monseigneur* if there was not the probable assurance that it would be agreeable to the Deputies of Congress, and that they would not only regard it as a new proof of the pleasure that the treaty has given to France, but also as a means of rendering its respective advantages more valuable."

5

Deane, Izard, the Lees, Arthur and William—Edmé Genet was in touch with them, a spectator, inevitably, of their unlovely wranglings, of their continuous attacks upon each other and upon Franklin and Adams.

Izard wanted ships. His letters came pouring in to Edmé Genet—this was after the treaty—filled with invitations to breakfast and requests for ships. There must be convoys. The English were capturing too many merchantmen. The whole French fleet must be sent to America at once. Admiral d'Estaing was doing everything wrong —which was true—the French naval operations were inadequate, and South Carolina and Charleston were going to be attacked—which was also true. The whole French fleet must be sent at once. French ships, French ships and more French ships.

And that poor Deane, with his mixed up accounts and his rash promises of colonelcies and generalcies in America to every foreign adventurer who came clamoring after him. Ducoudray, for instance, who was to have been General in Chief of Artillery. "Congress will give no heed to a contract [for a commission] made with [Deane]," Théveneau de Francy told Beaumarchais; "Mr. D—— has far exceeded his powers in granting commissions to officers. . . . He has not even the right to make a lieutenant." But then nobody wanted to be a lieutenant; they all wanted to be generals at nineteen like La Fayette.

And when they recalled him in 1778 to answer a great many questions at home—and to listen to his disagreeable observations concerning the sums owed, so he claimed,

by Congress to Beaumarchais, Deane and Hortalez and Company—Théveneau knew that it was "the work of that famous politician of Spain and Berlin, Arthur Lee." And Beaumarchais had something to say, again, to "the King's Ministers alone." Copy in the Bureau of Interpreters. Mr. Lee, it seemed, had "often explained himself . . . during his libertine suppers" on the subject of the advantages which England might still have to offer to him. Beaumarchais was all stirred up over Lee's statements to Congress to the effect that the Hortalez shipments were a gift to America, that he had it from "Hortalez" himself and that Deane was a trickster; and Beaumarchais proposed to speak with "great frankness" and make it known that Arthur Lee had caused his brother William—the London alderman—to be brought over from England, and that "it is through him that he holds his secret correspondence [with England]."

Well, well. He was always full of ideas, that Beaumarchais. And who among the Ministers could tell—perhaps he was right. Anything was possible in that madhouse of spies.

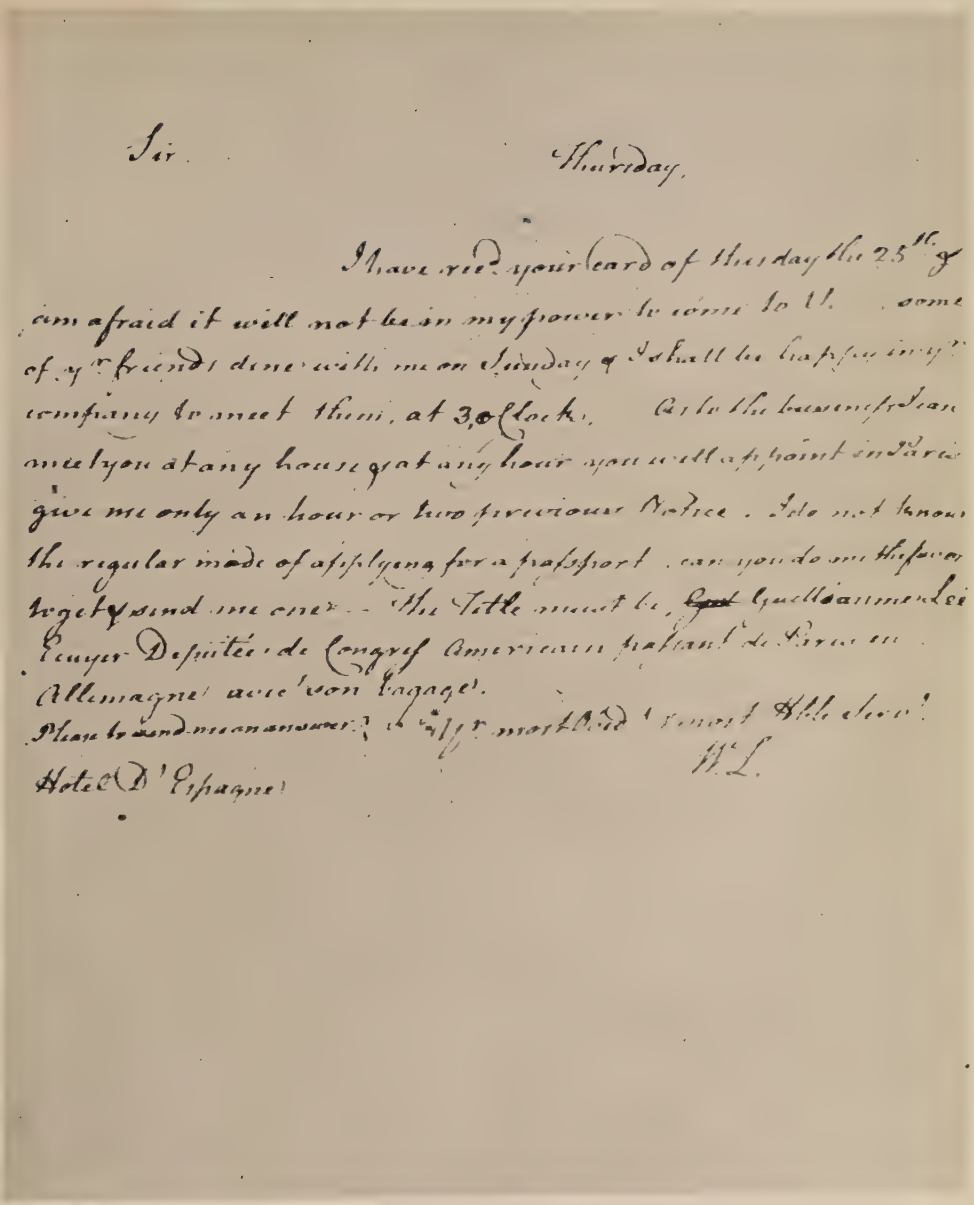
And Beaumarchais was convinced that Mr. Lee was "a two headed spear, for this reason; that four days after the arrival of [Deane's] recall . . . Mr. Lee sent his valet very secretly to London. . . . What is the object of this mysterious message? Why do they always know at London so exactly what is going on at Versailles? How were they informed . . . that a plan for a treaty [with America] was being considered? And why did they make such great efforts to corrupt me and to induce me to speak [with] gold—if not to include me . . . in the disgrace of Mr. Deane and ruin me at Versailles while they were ruining him in America?" That

valet sent to London was "the key to the whole affair." He had been sent to betray the treaty and hasten the departure of British envoys who should forestall it in America. Mr. Lee had connived with a French personage in order to discredit Beaumarchais, and to inform "his English friends that America's Lover, that is what they call me, was disgraced and that there was no longer anything to fear from me." That—according to Beaumarchais—was "a faithful history of the intrigue" intended to eliminate him and Deane. And "truly, all this appears very miserable," but "it is always contemptible things that injure great affairs."

And as for the charges against Deane, Beaumarchais had told him that he had the other's complete vindication in his wallet. "Lee accuses you of having . . . sent officers to America, and I have . . . a letter in cipher from the politic Lee who urges me warmly to send some engineers and officers to . . . America. . . . Lee pretends to have received from me the assurance that all my [Hortalez] consignments . . . were gifts from France, and all the rest is a romance of your cupidity—but in that same wallet into which I reach I have the bargain in cipher between Lee and myself which proves that my relations [in America] were established by this very Lee on the basis . . . of . . . commerce, active and reciprocal, and not otherwise."

Interesting documents, surely, and a very thick wallet.

And then some instructions for the Ministers. To escort him home, and make a good effect, Deane must have, if not a whole royal fleet, at least a royal frigate. "Mr. de Sartines can provide it." He must have a good vindicating brief, "and of that his friend Beaumarchais will take charge with pleasure." He must have a testimonial of good



Sir. Thursday.

I have rec.d your card of this day the 25th & am afraid it will not be in my power to come to U. some of y.r friends dine with me on Sunday & I shall be happy in y.r company to meet them, at 3,0 Clock. As to the business I can meet you at any house & at any hour you will appoint in Paris give me only an hour or two previous Notice. I do not know the regular mode of applying for a passport. can you do me the favor to get & send me one. The Title must be, ~~Gen~~ Guillaume Lee Ecuyer Deputée de Congres Americain passant de Paris en Allemagne avec son bagage.

Please to send me an answer. & Y.r most Obed.t & most Hble Serv.t

W. L.

Hotel D'Espagne

WILLIAM LEE TO EDMÉ GENET

Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the Genet papers.

conduct, "and that important document is Count de Vergennes's task." Finally "I think he should have some distinguished favor"—the King's picture perhaps—and that should "emanate from the hand of Count de Maurepas in the King's name." Something to do for everybody, including His Majesty. But everything must be kept very secret, so that Deane's enemies "and ours, believing themselves certain of triumph, will go to sleep." Beaumarchais was even ready to leave Paris, supposedly "as a persecuted man who abandons everything."

And the funny part of it was that in 1778 William Lee was being accused by a certain "Petrie" of having sent advance information concerning the treaty to London, and three times a duel was postponed and finally abandoned, without any retraction from "Petrie." But in 1779 William Lee was writing to Edmé Genet that "I suppose you know all the channels through which the Eng—h get intelligence of what schemes you are planning; however I must mention that it has been hinted to me to beware of somebody that did and perhaps does now lodge in the Rue Sainte Anne. . . . I know 'tis an old practice for the English spies to pretend the warmest attachment to the American cause and to ridicule and abuse the Eng—h Ministry in all companies . . ."

And Edmé Genet's people found the man—found a man—in the Rue Sainte Anne, and his name was Petrie. "Petrie, Scotchman," the note is in the Genet papers, "bankrupt in England. . . . Petrie sees the D[octor] F[ranklin] every day. . . . He hasn't a penny and makes a splurge in Paris, gives dinners etc. London advises that it was the English Ministry who paid his expenses and received from

him reports of everything he [could] find out concerning the affairs . . . of the Cabinet of Versailles."

What was anyone to believe?

6

There is something about an old fashioned secret agent's letters that gives them away. They complain with frequent bitterness about money matters, and they are too mysterious, too theatrical, too palpably artificial. The accidental progress of inspection turned up such a letter among the Genet papers. A different handwriting on the superscription from that in the letter itself; a complicated address, in care of a shop, to a certain Le Blanc; no signature; contents referring to a gentleman who "may be of essential service [in preventing the Empress of Russia from joining with England] as he has a decisive influence over a lady who is . . . one of the Empress's chief favorites." The further accidental chronology of discovery—a less fortunate chance might have produced the denouement too prematurely, and spoiled for the investigator that illusion of the mystery plot which old family papers sometimes provide—further discovery revealed other letters in the same hand, many of them from Brussels in 1779, some of them signed Le Noir. Le Blanc, Le Noir—Mr. Black writing to Mr. White.

That Le Blanc was Edmé Genet was immediately evident from the correspondence and from Genet's discussions of it with Vergennes, and with Sartines at the Ministry of the Navy. It was in March, 1779, that a "person" had offered "to try and procure . . . a channel of correspondence which might serve to instruct the King's Council concerning the projects of the English Council, the orders sent to fleet

commanders, their destinations, the secrets of financial operations etc." And Sartines had written that "it will have to be tried out." As for the expenditure involved, Genet imagined that the Ministry would consent to it "in order to possess so important a correspondence . . . especially now that the Court of London has just discovered . . . in the offices of the Admiralty itself some spies who were sending information to France . . . which we will no longer receive here: a loss, let me say in passing, which I regret very slightly with a system organized as mine is, and which the English cannot tamper with." So they met, Le Blanc and Le Noir, at the Hotel d'Espagne in Paris, and Genet took notes of the agreement. Twenty-four thousand *livres* a year, to remunerate minor agents, the first installment payable when the first report should be received; the letters to be sent through intermediaries in Hamburg and Frankfort; and an additional expense account when "for very important affairs a special messenger is to be sent as Mr. Le Noir will direct."

And the letters began to come in; all sorts of reports, not so very important, and suggestions for naval enterprises. And demands for money. And complaints. "Somehow or other," in April, "all your proceedings, especially with regard to the marine, do get very quickly to England; surely some method might be fallen on to stop this, at least to prevent such communications from going by the post." The English had a very good scheme. "For many months past two of the cleverest . . . clerks have been selected out of the post office in London, and one of them placed at Harwich and the other at Dover in the post offices there to open and examine all the letters that come down there to come to the continent by Calais, Ostend or Holland. . . . If some plan

similar to this is not practised in France I am sure it should be done. . . . What a great stroke it would have been had measures been taken to intercept the British convoy with troops and provisions for New York." And "your letters should not have the Versailles post mark on them."

It was a difficult business, Le Noir informed Le Blanc, and "you must be sensible of the risk and danger that the person [in England] will be exposed to . . . therefore every possible precaution must be taken to prevent him being discovered. For which reason I cannot venture to write to him by the post. . . . Perhaps . . . a letter might sometimes come by the post, but in that case it may be advisable for you to point out some trusty person at Leyden . . . or any other neutral and unsuspected place to whom letters may occasionally be enclosed." And it was an expensive business "for a man to lay himself out properly to execute [the task of agent]. Proper companies should be mixed with and occasional douceurs should be distributed. To associate much and gain a great deal would consume time and dissipate money." However, "there is a direct key to the [British] Cabinet which might be pointed out." A disappointing business too, as when "the gentleman who carried the letter [to England] had his baggage seized by a custom house officer and among it was the letter. The whole was carried to the Custom House by which means the letter has got into the hands of the public officers."

Fine reading for the Custom House if it resembled the one sent in June to an anonymous person in England, telling him that "the cruel and unmerited treatment that you have received . . . renders an apology unnecessary for the proposition I am now going to make you. . . . I presume

you can have no objection to undertake to give me regularly the information I want. . . . I wish, Sir, to have the earliest advice of all the determinations and designs of the British Secret Cabinet, of every plan of operation against America. . . . An exact and immediate account of every expedition or attack that is designed against America. . . . The secret instructions given to the commanders . . . as well as to the Ministers. . . . Every secret negotiation that may be proposed. . . . Particular attention will be necessary to the Admiralty and Secretaries of State's offices, though perhaps if a key could be found to the Secret Cabinet itself it will be the shortest way of going to work as well as the surest." £800 a year, an alphabetical code enclosed, and the present letter "written freely and fully . . . knowing the conveyance to be safe."

7

Interesting letters, the letters signed Le Noir, if only for their revelation of the not so very prudent methods of secret correspondence employed in those days. But they happened also to have a much greater interest, for of the signed letters not all of them were signed Le Noir. Some of them were signed with an entirely different name, the real name. The name of William Lee.

The Genet papers are perfectly specific concerning Le Noir's true identity—it was no secret in the bureau—but in any case the anonymous letter and two of the others to Le Blanc have been published, though without comment or explanation, in the volumes of William Lee's letters edited by Mr. W. C. Ford. William Lee had been appointed Commissioner to Berlin and Vienna in 1778; he had de-

layed his departure for almost a year and had then not been able to secure recognition from those Courts; he had taken up residences in Brussels and Frankfort, accomplishing nothing to all appearances, and earning the recall from his unsuccessful mission sent to him in 1779. Actually, all during that period, he was acting as a secret agent at its expense for the French Ministry of the Navy, trying to establish contacts with England, reporting what he could to Edmé Genet. The circumstance seems to dispose of Beaumarchais's allegations of disloyalty, and of the possibility of any credence given to them by the French Ministers.

But he grew disgusted finally. Deane had gone home, Arthur Lee was recalled, in America the charges and countercharges growing out of the Hortalez dispute were flying between the Deane and Lee factions. They had none of them behaved at all admirably in France, with their jealousies and recriminations, but, as Izard saw it and notified Edmé Genet, the Deane party in America "found that they could not possibly exculpate Deane"—Congress would not then approve his accounts—"and therefore they have endeavored to involve all the other Commissioners with him." And in Paris, Edmé Genet was informing Sartines that Mr. Lee "appears to be deeply affected by the quarrel which Mr. Silas Deane has just stirred up in America against his brother and against himself, and he is afraid that [Deane's] accusations may have produced a bad impression of them [the Lees] here: more than that, he sees a danger for himself from the United States in the secret undertaking which he is disposed to attempt in order to procure an interesting correspondence for France."

And what William Lee had said to Genet was that he

would not agree any longer to meet minor agents in person, unless positively ordered to do so by Sartines, "because I am no stranger to the wicked insinuations that have been made by some dirty emissaries to those whom I esteem that a near connection of mine [Arthur Lee] is inimical to the cause we are engaged in. Such base and untrue insinuations I cannot suppose have found any credit, because they are so totally devoid of truth . . . however they are sufficient to make me cautious in my conduct, for if ever it should be known that I had this secret interview, and the person afterwards returned to E——d, some hardy liar would be found to assert roundly that it was on some scheme injurious to my country or its friends. . . ."

There was, certainly, no lack of hardy liars to be found in those brave days.

CHAPTER III

POST ROADS

1

EDMOND CHARLES was not continuously at Versailles during those years. In 1776 he had been in Strasburg; in 1777, for a while, he was in Paris with his tutor, Mr. Lindblom, studying chemistry, for one thing, under Lesage, and learning the ways of the world. Going to the Opera Ball.

Because Mr. Lindblom "begins to be more satisfied with you," Edmé Genet wrote in February, in one of his almost daily letters to his son, "I yield more willingly to your mother's request to send you your white domino, and my black one for Mr. Lindblom, so that you can both go . . . to the Opera ball where you will see your sister Adelaïde after she leaves the one at the Palais Royal. She will pass an hour there with Madame Campan in the front boxes. Their box will be next to that of the Queen and that of the Duke de Chartres. It is the Queen who has taken this box for her women. Your sisters do not know that we send you your domino to go to see them, so that you can both have some amusement out of it. . . . You must be well dressed under

the domino and each of you wear white gloves and borrow hats with plumes."

It was evidently a tremendous event in the Genet family, and the parents were full of anxieties and instructions. "We have troubled ourselves," they told the fourteen year old boy, "as to the manner in which you will conduct yourself." He must not leave Mr. Lindblom, nor give himself up "to the ardor of the amusement." He must leave as soon as his sisters retired—"and even before, if the Queen remains too long a time"—and "go to bed so as to be at Mr. Lesage's lesson at ten o'clock in the morning." Indeed, "it will be a good thing to sleep before you go." And "remember generally that you must never tell your name to a mask. . . . Observe also that you must always be very careful of badinage under your mask and never say anything disobliging . . . and do not get angry if a rude mask says to you that you fatigue her. Some people do not like to be tormented. . . . I advise you to go late rather than early on account of the crowd. Your sisters will leave with the Queen to go to the house of the Duchess de Chartres at three o'clock."

But the young man paid no attention to these paternal exhortations, for on the day after the ball "the Chevalier assures me that he saw you at the Opera as early as half past six . . . from which I judge you did not take any sleep before going." But it had been a famous party; Adelaïde had "come back enraptured . . . with the kindness with which the Queen has loaded her;" and Edmond Charles's own account of the festivity had greatly diverted Her Majesty. And of course his sisters had recognized him. "It was because you were the dupe of the small talk of the ball and did not know that they always begin with the remark 'I know

you.' You believed that they really did know you, and you did not disguise your voice. These, however, are lessons of which you will not often have need to take advantage. Tell me that you have resumed your course of study."

And pay more attention to letter writing. "Since Holland paper is necessary for you in order to write to me, you can get a half ream. . . . I hope the faults in orthography will appear less than on ordinary paper. . . . On Holland paper you will also be more pleased to put the date, and that you may not so often omit it I will ask you . . . to put it in two ways . . . one in the French, the other in the Latin style." From Versailles the letters came regularly, filled with family news and gossip of the Court. "This evening," on May 14, "is the fete at Trianon that the Queen gives to the Emperor [of Austria] and at which will be your mother and your three sisters . . . I do not expect the ladies [home] until three o'clock in the morning. I will be in bed and asleep."

And in the midst of it all, the great business of the inoculation. "You have written to me so generously that you would come here to join your sisters if they had the small pox. Well, my dear friend, you can come then, for I have resolved with my wife to have you all three inoculated. . . . The example of the Count d'Artois who goes everywhere and exposes himself to everything, as well as all our young lords who lead the same life after they have been inoculated, confirms me in my resolution. . . . Mr. de la Fayette . . . caused himself to be inoculated, [and] it is also to the liking of the Queen." She was having little Jacques Amand, her adopted peasant boy, inoculated. In fact, "the Queen wishes your inoculation to take place at Marly where she has had

the goodness to lend us a fine lodge in the middle of the gardens." Quite a number of persons were planning to be inoculated at Marly, and "the Queen is making a fete of it and speaks to everyone of it. You will have two of the four inoculators of the King . . . I am certain that many people in favor will profit by the circumstance, and that you will be a brigade. It will be a fete and not a malady."

But on the other hand, "you imagine very pleasantly, my dear friend, that the Queen will come to see you at Marly, and that you can there present her with your book. The idea made us laugh. It is very foolish." There was a limit, after all, to these royal favors.

2

Two years passed, and there was a real separation facing the Genets. For in 1778 the King had granted Edmond Charles a lieutenancy in the Corps of Dragoons, and in 1779 his regiment, the First Duke de Luynes, was leaving for Brest with orders for America. The great expedition under Rochambeau was gathering, and the boy in white was off to the war which his father had done his share to promote.

Villoison was pleased to hear that the boy had gone to Brest, and congratulated him "on finding himself there under such splendid circumstances. It was the most interesting occasion, and I hope it will make history." A turn of fate, and the young Dragoon who spoke English and Spanish so fluently might have found himself negotiating the surrender at Yorktown with "Beau" Fersen—the Swedish nobleman who went to America because he was in love with the Queen of France. But at the last moment there was not room enough in the frigates, and it seemed that there was

no need in any case for cavalry in America, and the First Dragoons did not go. Axel de Fersen was to negotiate the surrender by himself, and return from America more in love than ever with the Queen of France; and the Dragoon who had not gone was to be the first to receive the Yorktown news, in the Bureau of Interpreters.

He stayed, instead, at Brest—all crowded with troops and ships—to work there with his young friend Girard on a dictionary of English nautical terms for use by the French sailors in America. He was sixteen, and as usual he did not write often enough to satisfy the parents at home. "Nothing is more charming than a correspondence well kept up," but he gave them frequent cause for affectionate complaint. "Not a moment of the day passes, my dear son," his father told him, "that we do not think of you. Your absence seems much harder to bear than when you were but four leagues from us. Providence will guard you and keep you out of danger. Do not fail to write us by every ordinary if you do not want us to pass the most miserable nights. . . . You should have three ordinary posts a week. Do not let a day pass without having written to us. It is not the quantity that we want, it is the regularity. Three little letters a week will make us happy."

And as for Brest, "I do not conceal from you that your sojourn at Brest is a subject of anxiety to us, and by reason of your youth to a good many people who interest themselves in you. Even the Queen said yesterday to Adelaïde that she was uneasy for her brother on account of the sauciness of the young gentlemen of the navy who are a hundred times more impudent and quarrelsome than the pages here, and she ordered your sister to advise me not to let you stay very

long at Brest. . . . You will certainly find Nantes more amusing than Brest." He must be sure and leave cards everywhere, and his father would send him a description of the coast from Brest to Nantes which he must read first and then make notes of his own on the spot. This "will make your letters curious."

But the young jackanapes went and bought himself a great model of a frigate, and put it on top of his father's *cabriolet* in which he was travelling, and Edmé Genet's frugal French soul was profoundly shocked. "I disapprove highly of the frigate," he informed his son. "You speak of four *louis* [for the sails]. . . . Everybody here shrugs his shoulders. Four *louis.* The idea of carrying it on your carriage completes our despair. We will not see either the vessel or the *cabriolet.* They will both be broken. . . . It was very indiscreet of you to buy it before asking my consent. . . . It will be in pieces before reaching here and I do not know where to put it. What do you say about four *louis* for the sails—surely you mean four *livres*—and who is there here to sail it. . . . And the box will have broken my *cabriolet* which I attach great value to. . . . They gave you bad advice who told you to put it on your *cabriolet.*"

But finally Mr. de Sartines agreed to purchase the model for the bureau, and gave Genet twelve *louis* "to pay the frigate carriage post," and the paternal dismay was evaporated. There were other domestic matters, too, to occupy the good man's mind, for it was the season of Adelaïde's wedding. The bridegroom had a gold watch chain with three chains for Edmond Charles, and "a thing without precedent, the Queen gives [the bride] her portrait to put into one of her bracelets. The details [of etiquette] are very touch-

ing. You know that upon the other bracelet she can no longer have anything but a monogram."

And " the day of the marriage passed delightfully. The married couple are still asleep. We dine with them at their house." The whole picture of French family life in royal Versailles is in those lines.

3

At Nantes, headquarters of American mercantile operations—full of Yankee ship captains and British prisoners of war—Edmond Charles and Girard were to perfect their nautical English and acquaint themselves with all the intricacies of commercial routine and maritime law.

Villoison again wanted to "congratulate Monsieur your son on the new opportunities he finds to perfect himself in the English language, although I am inclined to believe that he has nothing left to learn on that subject. Nevertheless I wish him, as well as my country, the pleasure of conversing in France with some captured British admiral. There could be no conversation more interesting to a good Frenchman." And Edmé Genet thought it "absolutely necessary that you should pass some time with some of the English prisoners on parole. That will be worth a voyage to England to you towards speaking English."

As for the American captains, "my son must not waste the time of the Americans reading the flowers of ordinary poetry, but only tirades that are difficult because of technical expressions." It was splendid that "without going out of France you are at the same time in England and in America." He must translate *The Shipwreck,* "read it with

the American captains pen in hand," so that the bureau could have it published as a glossary of nautical terms. That would be much more useful than going into a commercial house temporarily as a clerk, as Edmond Charles had suggested.

When he came home from Nantes, "you will return here, my dear friend, more practiced in English than I am now. There are besides a number of subjects in which you will be my master. . . . You must follow it up with the technicalities of the military land forces, of finance and of public law, and you will then have a good right to be Chief of the Bureau of Interpreters. It is my chief ambition." And when Edmond Charles had on occasions to be chided a little for his extravagances and his procrastinations, his father reminded him that "I occupy myself with the means of making you pass your youth agreeably, usefully, decently."

But in July there were naval battles pending, "we are overwhelmed with translations," and the two young men must come home. "The moment is approaching when you can be very useful to us. A combat is very near and I have no one who understands anything about marine matters. Let me enjoy as soon as possible the fruit of your studies." And "avoid expense as much as possible. I am up to my neck in political and domestic embarrassments." Travel at night to escape the fearful heat of that summer, "deny yourself the inn ragouts," beware of poisoning from eating dishes cooked in dirty copper utensils, and send home a full description of every town on the route.

And at Amboise, Edmond Charles must be sure to call on the Duke de Choiseul, the creator of the bureau. "It will

be sufficient to be combed . . . and without boots. . . . Try to arrive without noise and without causing people to ask, Who is this? Who is this?"

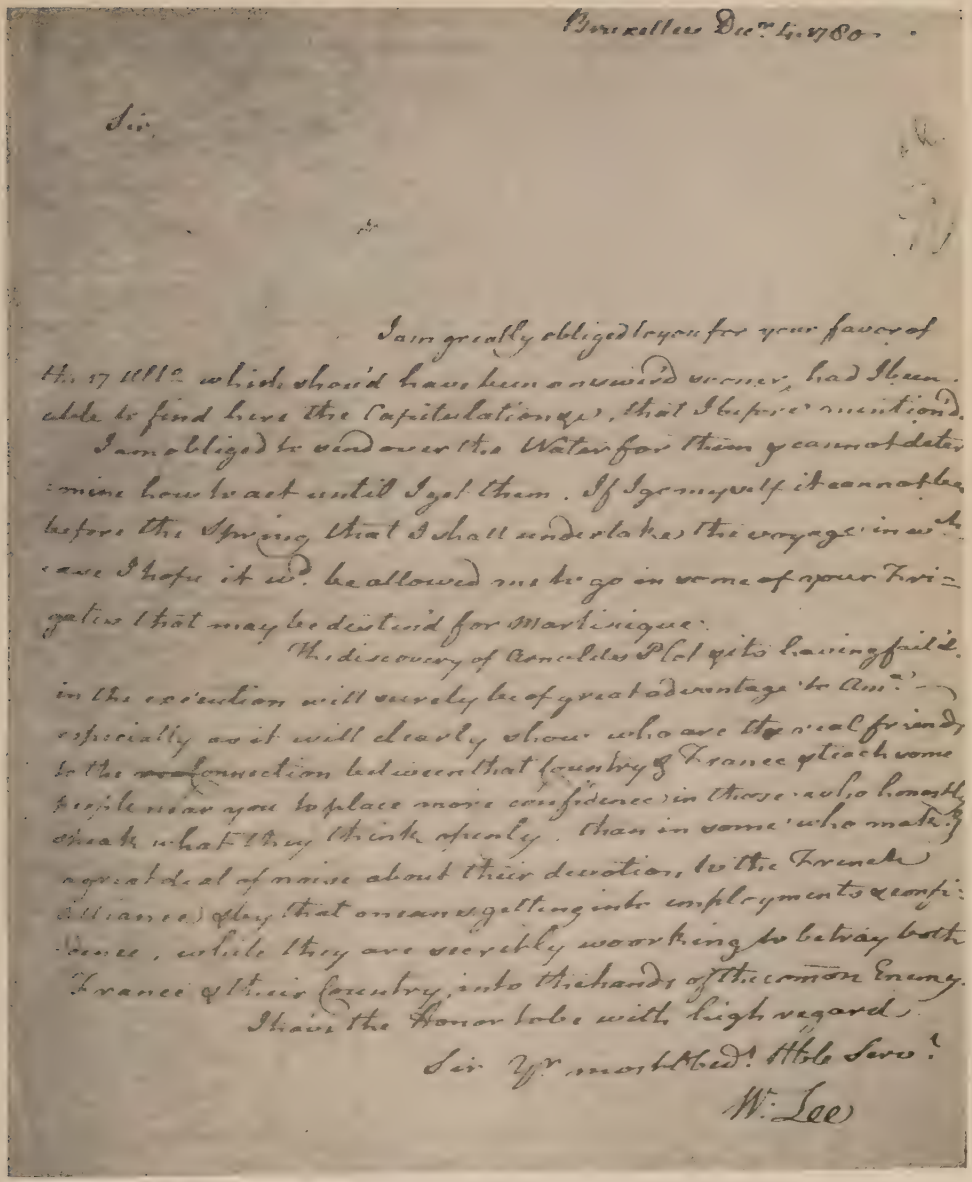
And in the midst of all this advice, Edmond Charles himself was writing that "I assure you I have no idol at Nantes but Shipwrecks. . . . The prettiest woman in the city, who dwells in our house on the same floor, and whom we see eternally through a window that gives on her boudoir, is not capable even of diverting our attention. You may judge from this how deeply we are interested in our studies."

Just a little impudent, already.

4

In 1780 Edmond Charles was seventeen. It was time to think more widely of education, of travel, of his career. Vergennes wanted him sent to Germany, to study the language. The long journeys down the post roads of Europe were to begin. Villoison was glad to hear of his progress and of "his fine and extensive plans of travel." And it was a good thing that he was going in uniform, "the most comfortable and the most honorable dress in which to travel"—although Edmond Charles was to be very much annoyed because his military cloak did not fit properly. He was to attend a university, Göttingen or Giessen—the choice fell on Giessen—and "in Germany he will find fewer dangerous pleasures [than in Italy] and more opportunities for instruction in his line."

He started off in March, calling himself Mr. de Charmontot from the family landed name by which he was known at home in order to distinguish him from his father—and perhaps just a little on account of the well sounding *de*—



Bruxelles Decr. 4. 1780.

Sir,

I am greatly obliged to you for your favor of the 17 Ultº which shou'd have been answer'd sooner, had I been able to find here the Capitulations &c, that I before mention'd. I am obliged to send over the Water for them & cannot determine how to act until I get them. If I go myself it cannot be before the Spring that I shall undertake the voyage in wch case I hope it wd. be allowed me to go in some of your Frigates that may be distin'd for Martinique.

The discovery of Arnolds Plot & its having fail'd in the execution will surely be of great advantage to Amca. — especially as it will clearly show who are the real friends to the ~~real~~ connection between that Country & France & teach some people near you to place more confidence in those who honestly speak what they think openly, than in some who make a great deal of noise about their devotion to the French Alliance & by that means getting into employments & confidence, while they are secretly working to betray both France & their Country, into the hands of the comon Enemy.

I have the Honor to be with high regard,

Sir Yr. most obedt. Hble Servt.

W. Lee

WILLIAM LEE TO EDMÉ GENET

Referring to Arnold. Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the Genet papers.

and immediately he began to have the time of his life. Travel —when one was a handsome young Dragoon with letters of introduction from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs—travel under those circumstances was a panorama of festivity. One arrived, one shook out one's good suit and announced oneself, and the town came running to entertain one. Of course it helped if one danced and rode well, if one could speak several languages gallantly, if one could sing little Italian airs pleasantly. Edmond Charles could do all these things extremely well.

At Verdun he missed the stage because they had kept him by force at the supper table; at Metz he was "surrounded with everything that is agreeable." No time to write. "I leave my pen with regret," but "they come for me to go to the theatre. There are ladies too." He was "much amused," and had been "feasted beyond all expression." And then it was Frankfort, after a terrible journey in "an abominable carriage," shut up "in a coach with twelve persons who did nothing but drink on the route."

And Frankfort was magnificent. It was the season of the Fair and all of Germany had come. Banquets, hunting parties—with the ladies all riding astride—balls, concerts, operas, suppers. "Invitations upon invitations, dinners upon dinners, concerts upon concerts," but "do not be uneasy, you know my sobriety." However, he had purchased "a superb pair of spurs." And "in two days I have become acquainted with almost all the pretty women of the city." In fact, "as you expect sincerity of me, I will tell you frankly that no one is more noticed in the city than I; there is no fete at which the French Dragoon is not. This evening I dance the minuet of honor at the opening of the Vauxhall of the Nobility.

. . . There are here charming women, especially among the nobility. . . . I have a seat in the box of the nobility for the whole of the Fair."

They were positively mobbing him, all these ladies of the nobility—the word flowed very readily from his pen too—and one reason for it was that he had "composed a bulletin in which I have combined all the recollections that remained in my mind [of the fashions] of Versailles and of Paris." He had presented it to the Princess de Nassau who was enchanted, and showed it to the Countess Lippe "from whom another lady snatched it," and so on around the circle while they disputed as to which of them should have the author to dinner. And it was finally decided that "it should be the princess and that the nobility should assemble there." Whereupon the young clown went home with a friend and sat up half the night concocting a totally imaginary design for a Versailles headdress which those excellent ladies of the nobility received with rapture.

And there was one very special lady. "Miss d'E—— who sings very well . . . like an angel . . . who is twenty-three years old and who knows everybody." It was at her side, one evening at the theatre, that he had noticed a pair of opera glasses following him around all the time from behind the screen of another box. And it was Miss d'E—— who had informed him that they belonged to Mr. de Moustier, the French Minister at Cologne, who sat in a screened box "because he is afraid to show his wife who is ugly and crazy." But no matter, "you have a pretty bouquet there, give it to me [for] I have none," Miss d'E—— had begged Mr. de Charmontot. And "that young lady speaking very good German and being in Countess Lippe's box . . . I

stayed there until the end of the play." Why of course, and to a midnight supper with them afterwards.

But the next day Mr. de Moustier was at his rooms to warn him solemnly against the dangers of youth. This Miss d'E—— had a very bad reputation, and "Lord Fortescue [had] suffered himself to be enchained by her charms and [had] not returned to London until having passed four or five years at Frankfort." To all of which Edmond Charles replied that he had met the lady under the auspices of Countess Lippe, that he fully expected to be back at Versailles in a year's time and that Mr. de Moustier was too kind for words. In fact, judging from Edmond Charles's report of the episode to his father, Mr. de Moustier must have been able, even without his opera glasses, to see that he was being told to go to the devil.

In the meantime, Edmond Charles was reading German with a teacher who was "a pedant stuffed from head to foot with Latin;" he went to a "collegium," where eighty merchants "at the sound of a whistle . . . light their pipes and begin to play, to read or to drink;" he was in no hurry at all to get to Giessen, where "the students are all poor devils . . . and brutes;" and he hoped "that my precious Mama will send me some lines written by her own hand. I will always wear them near my heart, and they will preserve me from all danger."

5

And when he did finally get to Giessen, in April, it was "an unworthy hole stuffed with professors, and that is all there is in it. . . . The city is horrible . . . [only one] assembly where one can see ladies . . . in short, all in it is

much sadder than I can describe and than you can imagine. . . . The students are almost all peasants in sentiments and birth," and "the professors of this miserable university are unfortunates, covered with tatters." They were "learned brutes . . . who in Germany infect all the universities, and who in France would be thought nothing of." He had been on an excursion with some of them and their "professoresses," and "those gentlemen all returned drunk after having everyone smoked more than twenty pipes. These are their delicate pleasures. I saw in that charming fete scenes that would sully my pen to transcribe to you."

Villoison had not been impressed either. At Leipzig and Göttingen "the students . . . are rowdy, as were formerly those of Paris and Padua," and the institutions themselves were "only vast colleges where there is much to be lost in the way of manners and nothing to gain in the way of political training." And the food was dreadful. "Though my table is the best and dearest in the city," Edmond Charles complained, "I have not yet seen anything served on it but sauerkraut, salt beef and sometimes fresh beef. As I drink wine I am looked upon as the richest noble in France. We eat little but speak much, and as I have come here to speak and not to eat I believe I have perfectly fulfilled my object." He had, it was true, found nearby "the best Baroness possible," who lived in a lovely castle, spoke English and owned three piano-fortes, but his only real pleasure was to write in French to his father; that was the only moment "in which my heart joins in the conversation." It was a fearful existence for anyone "born in France whose mind is turned to gaiety."

Still, there were good professors who spoke good Ger-

man, and assemblies of men "where they speak German, drink and smoke;" and it was a good place in which to study, in order not to die of boredom. "When one does not study one must swallow flies." There was nothing else to do. Edmond Charles breakfasted on cold milk at half past five in the morning, and worked very hard all day at a variety of courses, and in July, when his father wanted him to go to Spa and see the King of Sweden, the young man was very much opposed to the idea. And very sarcastic in his letters home. Just a little impertinent.

"With six mails you have six times changed your mind . . . I must then go to Spa to bring back . . . but a shadow of vanity. I must then follow a phantom of hope and abandon real and solid studies." It would be a ridiculously long and expensive trip, "but no matter . . . I arrive at Spa. I shall see the King there. He will tell me the most flattering things . . . I shall write them in my journal and shall boast once at most to everyone of my family. But may it not be also on the contrary that, the waters tormenting his royal machinery . . . he may receive me coldly?" And what then? People would ask him what he had been doing in Germany and he would be obliged to answer "Beginning courses, and seeing the King bathe." The whole thing was absurd; it was a folly to send him to Spa; and "it is not I who speak, it is the love of study and of truth that you have nourished in me."

But the question settled itself, for a few days later "I shall never find expressions strong enough, dear Papa, to tell you how much I regret not to be able to fly immediately to Spa in order to mix with the crowd of adorers of His Swedish Majesty"—but Edmond Charles had most unfor-

tunately, and one suspects deliberately, "sprained a nerve" in his knee which would keep him in bed for at least a week. And in any case, Mr. Lindblom to the contrary, the King of Sweden was no great shakes. When it came to Kings, it was to Berlin that one must go, that Edmond Charles was most anxious to go. "To see that King of whom everyone speaks and whom so few people have seen." Frederic the Great, of Prussia.

And Villoison wanted Edmond Charles to go to Berlin; only there again, Berlin was only "a poor copy of Paris. Almost nothing but French is heard there, and pretty poor French, almost no German which is badly spoken there."

6

And at last, in September, Edmond Charles was in Berlin, for the final day of the military review. "I have seen many things of which I shall glorify myself all my life." Although "if I had not seen the King of Prussia at the head of twenty thousand men I should never be consoled for the lack of your letters and the [absence] of a friend upon whom I relied. . . . The former do not arrive, and the second has gone lovemaking to Leipzig."

For "it is not at all amusing to be in a city where one is not known." There was no mail from home; Mr. de Pons at the French Embassy would not receive him because he had no letter from Vergennes; "I have been here eight days and I have not yet been able to see the superb Minister of my King;" and, in order that "my letter may finish more agreeably than it began, I will tell you, dear Papa, that I have been robbed." By "a villainous soldier with large

whiskers." But the lovemaking friend had found time to announce him, and "behold me instantly surrounded by all the College of Mines who escorted me in a body back to my hotel." And the letters finally came, and Edmond Charles was to be attached to the embassy with secret instructions to collect and translate the Prussian military ordinances. It was his first diplomatic mission. He was also to study chemistry and mining, and, after his return to Paris, to find himself instrumental with his reports to the Academy of Sciences in the establishment of the School of Mines.

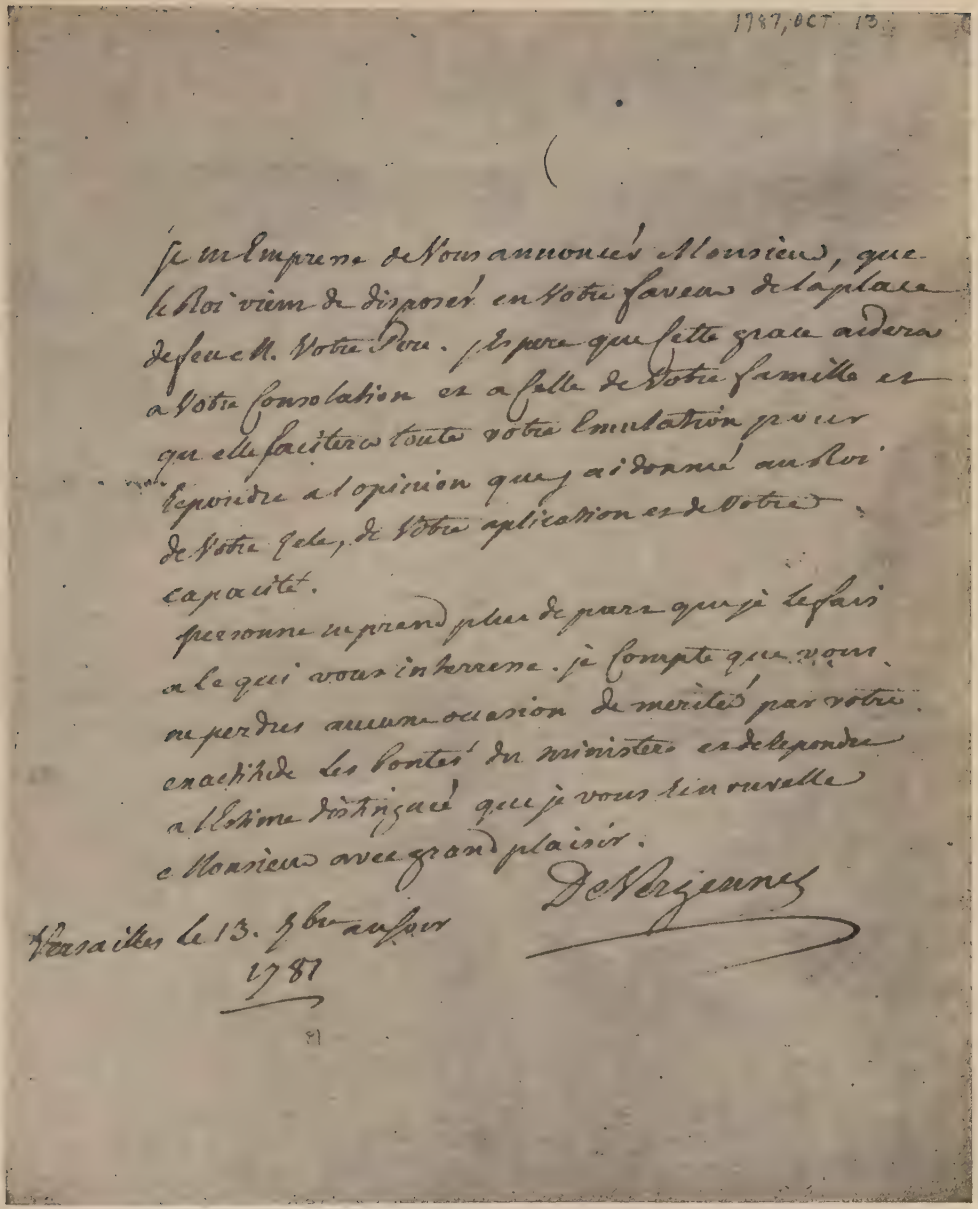
The King of Prussia received him very kindly, everybody liked him, and Villoison ascribed the boy's success in Berlin, not to the letters of introduction which he, Villoison, had furnished, but to the young Dragoon's "merit, his amiability, his mental qualities, his gentleness, his talents." And "such a handsome chap." The whole Academy of Berlin, Villoison told Edmé Genet, "is in love with Monsieur your son, and renders all the tribute which he deserves to his talents and superior knowledge, to his conduct, to his virtues; and if he did not have so attractive and pleasing a face I would say that he would do well to travel through Italy."

But that might be dangerous with so many lovely ladies around. At all events, they sent him on to Vienna, to Mr. de Breteuil's embassy, and "I congratulate you heartily," Villoison wrote to him, "on the brilliant beginning which you are making, Sir, in the career of diplomacy, and I share as warmly as possible in your satisfaction and in that which Monsieur your father must experience. . . . There you are now, Sir, on one of the biggest stages in the world, and you are serving your apprenticeship under a skillful master the selection of whom is well fitted to confirm the lofty ideas

which you have always established of your capacity and of your rare talents." Various gentlemen "speak to me of you . . . with transports of the highest [admiration] and they have informed me of your successes in Berlin where you gave delight to the Academy." And remember that the best training for a diplomat was the cultivation of Latin and Greek.

He had a good time, he learned whatever Breteuil could teach him, and in 1781 he was back at Versailles with his ambassador on furlough. And only just soon enough. For on September 11, Edmé Genet was dead, very suddenly in his fifty-fifth year only, of a malignant fever. The Clerk in Chief had put down his pen, and all Versailles came to do honor to that old servant of the State, and to follow his great funeral procession in which all the military corps of the King's Household demanded to be represented, although this courtesy was *de rigueur* only for nobles. From Venice, Villoison wrote of "the eternal and profound sorrow caused me by the loss which we all share in common of Monsieur your father whom I shall regret all my life." It was "a fatal moment."

And that very excellent man had had one great ambition; and immediately there came for Edmond Charles—Genet he was to be called from now on—that letter which his father would have been so proud to see. From Vergennes. First, on September 12, "my friendship and esteem for your late father are evidences, Sir, of the sincere interest that I take in that event which penetrates you and your family with the most legitimate as well as the most profound affliction. Your right to these sentiments ought to reassure you of the consequences and to leave you no doubt of my anxiety to



1787, OCT. 13.

Je m'Empresse de Vous annoncer Monsieur, que
le Roi vient de disposer en Votre faveur de la place
de feu M. Votre Pere. J'Espere que cette grace aidera
a Votre Consolation et a celle de Votre famille et
qu'elle faciliera toute votre Emulation pour
Repondre a l'opinion que j'ai donné au Roi
de Votre zele, de Votre aplication et de Votre
capacité.
personne ne prend plus de part que je le fais
a ce qui vous interresse. je Compte que vous
ne perdres aucune occasion de meriter par votre
exactitude les Bontés du ministere et de Repondre
a l'Estime distinguée que je vous Renouvelle
Monsieur avec grand plaisir.

De Vergennes

Versailles le 13. 7bre au soir
1787

VERGENNES, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TO GENET

Announcing Genet's appointment to succeed his father as Chief of the Bureau of Interpreters. Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the possession of the Library of Congress.

procure for you from the King testimonies of his bounty. I beg you, Sir, to take charge of your late father's office, as much as circumstances will permit you to do so."

And then on September 13, "I hasten to announce to you, Sir, that the King has just disposed of your late father's post in your favor. I hope that this favor will help to console you and your family, and that it will arouse all your ambition to confirm the opinion that I have given to the King of your zeal, of your application and of your capacity. Nobody takes more interest than I in what concerns you. I rely on you not to lose any opportunity of meriting by your diligence the kindness of the Ministry."

Edmond Charles Genet was the new Clerk in Chief of the Bureau of Interpreters. He sat in the chair which his father had first filled not quite thirty years before. He was eighteen years and some eight months old.

7

It was indeed a fatal moment, overwhelming "with cares, anxieties and sorrows." The boy in white was transformed into the boy in black; there were all manner of family troubles, arrangements to be made with Uncle Toto who was not very responsible, a great accumulation of debts to be paid—he did not leave off his mourning for several years, until the last of them had been liquidated—all the wreckage of a sudden disaster. And at the bureau, eight interpreters under his orders, all much older than himself, all of them perhaps a little jealous of his inherited position; the news of Yorktown which he took in person to the King, and a mass of work in connection with the forthcoming peace. But he was very dignified, very modest, very tact-

ful, amazingly industrious. "He did not forget himself for a single moment," Madame Campan wrote of him. It was in many ways one of the most notable periods of his career.

He settled down to it, clearing out his father's files, all those letters to the old Clerk in Chief. That one from Commodore Gillou to say goodbye. "Tell your very promising son I wish him all he merits, that obtained, he will be a great good man. . . . Do not forget I live in Charleston, South Carolina. Favor me with your correspondence, I will do myself the honor of writing to you often. Should the fates decree it that I do not see you again, Heaven grant you every felicity." Outside, in Versailles, when the days of seclusion were over, there was always the great world, and Madame d'Angevilliers in her brilliant, rather advanced, democratic salon, and his sisters at the Palace. Julie had a little Dauphin at last to sing to sleep, the first Dauphin, born in the month after Edmé Genet's death, on the Monday after Yorktown. And the Academy of Sciences, and botany, and the American trees in his father's garden—no, his own garden now—and the great *parterre* at Rambouillet to be filled with useful plants from all parts of the globe. Later on, after the peace, Mr. and Mrs. John Adams to be waited on, officially by appointment, and interpreted for during their visits to the Court. And Crèvecœur's wonderful "Letters of an American Farmer." A book to read and read, and discuss, and dream over. America.

And in the bureau, the same careful routine, the cabinet drawers for the British navy kept up to date, the long reports on commerce diligently penned, the commerce of England, of India, of America. The list of smuggling concerns in London and in Paris, and the high personages who pat-

ronized that interesting trade. Only Beaumarchais was not so popular now, for he had written his *Marriage of Figaro* which made so much fun of all established authorities, and the King had had it suppressed. Not so popular with the King and consequently with officialdom; but otherwise enormously popular, in all the salons, in all the private apartments at the Palace even, and his suppressed play on every tongue—Madame de Lamballe, Artois, all of them. Beaumarchais reading it in person to Princesses and Dukes. For they could not, from laughing at it, hear the Revolution already knocking at their doors.

And in Paris, more American Commissioners to negotiate a peace. More intrigues, more spies. More hardy liars.

8

They had curious instructions, those American Commissioners—John Adams, Franklin, John Jay just returned from a fruitless mission to Spain. "Neither of the two parties," the Franco-American treaty of 1778 had stated, "shall conclude either truce or peace with Great Britain without the formal consent of the other first obtained;" and in 1782 Versailles had agreed to separate negotiations on the part of America and France with London, "provided that [they] shall progress at an equal pace, and that the two treaties shall be signed at the same time, and shall not take precedence one over the other." But Congress had further instructed the Commissioners to conclude nothing with England without first submitting it to the Cabinet of Versailles for approval and advice. And while Genet probably did not know it at the time, he must certainly ten years later, when

he was preparing his files for his own mission to America, have been aware of the intrigues and briberies, the "donations" of French agents in America under La Luzerne and Gérard, by means of which these undignified, completely subservient instructions had been obtained.

But there they were, and Franklin was at first inclined to obey them. He was "much embarrassed and constrained by our instructions." But Jay smelled a rat. He had just been in Spain, and he knew that there was a secret treaty between France and Spain, involving, he believed, the navigation of the Mississippi and other matters as the price of Spain's participation in the English war, and he did not trust Vergennes. And he would not obey his instructions—one can only give the briefest summary of these events—and when a certain Rayneval was dispatched very secretly by Vergennes to London, in September, 1782, Jay, without consulting Franklin, dispatched an emissary of his own right on Rayneval's heels—Vaughan, the friend of Franklin and Lord Shelburne—to tell the British Ministry what must be done if there was to be peace between England and America. And the Englishmen saw the point at once, and in November the provisional treaty was signed, without any reference to Versailles.

"It would have relieved me from much anxiety and uneasiness," Jay wrote to Livingston, "to have concerted all these steps with Dr. Franklin"—Adams had been away on a mission to Holland—"but on conversing with him about Mr. Rayneval's journey he did not concur with me in sentiment respecting the object of it, but appeared to me to have a great degree of confidence in the Count [Vergennes]." But Jay had none, and was convinced that Rayneval's mis-

sion was involved with Spain and hostile to American interests. And to the British Commissioner he had stated that "we shall say to France . . . if you have entered into any separate measures with other people, not included in [our] agreement, and will load the negotiations with their demands, we shall give ourselves no concern about them."

It made a great furore on both sides of the Atlantic, and in America men like Madison were of the opinion that the Commissioners had acted ungenerously to France, and that Jay had been guilty of criminal suspicions. And it was not a pleasant moment for Franklin when he was obliged to go to Vergennes with news of the provisional treaty in one hand and a request for further loans—parts of which he received—in the other. And Vergennes was very angry. "I am at a loss," he wrote to Franklin, "to explain your conduct and that of your colleagues. . . . You have concluded your preliminary articles without any communication between us, although the instructions from Congress prescribe that nothing shall be done without the participation of the King. . . ."

But if Vergennes was angry—and Rayneval in a daze—it was for another much less valid reason; and in private, talking to his Clerk in Chief, Vergennes claimed not to be angry at all with Franklin, and to have foreseen Jay's interference.

9

For long years afterwards, discussing these transactions, Genet was to declare that he had placed "every day before Count de Vergennes the news which I received from England and America;" that Vergennes "appeared always to me

to feel a great interest in the success of the American Revolution, and sent me frequently to carry to the King the favorable news of the war;" and that "when it was known that by the art and management of Mr. Jay a separate peace had been concluded by the American Commissioners . . . the Count said 'We expected it; Franklin has been overruled by his colleague Mr. Jay. It is wrong, but the magnanimity of the King must not notice the breach of faith in which we are sure the Congress has not partaken.' "

And not only that, but "the Ministry had previously to this act of ingratitude received through Mr. James Jay, the brother of John, very correct information on the English predilection of his brother and his connection with several public characters in England." Genet himself, in those later days, had "expected from France a correspondence of my father with Mr. James Jay which would throw a great deal of light on those transactions, but though sent from France I have not yet received it, and fear that it has been intercepted either in France or in this country [America]." And Genet had often seen Sir James Jay at his father's house, and had heard him "frequently affirm" that his brother John Jay "had always been opposed to the independence of the United States, that he hated France as much as his [Huguenot] ancestors . . . and that if he could he would procure a reconciliation between England and her old colonies . . . and baffle all the expectations of France by an alliance between the two countries that would be nearly equal to reunion."

Now, the correspondence of Sir James Jay aside, one is in the presence of a magnificent comedy, of which, at the time, one can only suppose the young Clerk in Chief to have

been an uninformed spectator. For the Anglo-American provisional treaty had been signed in November, and in October of that year Vergennes had been writing to La Luzerne in America that "you will yourself feel, Sir, that . . . our way of thinking must be an impenetrable secret to the Americans: it would be in their eyes a crime which they would never forgive us. It behooves us to leave them to their illusions, to do everything that can make them fancy that we share them, and undertake only to defeat any attempts to which these illusions might carry them, if our co-operation is required."

And "our way of thinking," expressed in a Foreign Affairs memorandum quoted many years later by a French official, Mr. de Circourt, was that France must "regulate the territorial extent [granted to America] and what its boundaries should be," namely the original colonial limits; so that America "may never be able to extend beyond them, neither by conquest, nor by association between the American colonists." For it was as much to England's interest as to that of France and Spain to "stop [the Americans] by force at the first infraction of the limits and the first attempt towards extending beyond them." And to Spain, Vergennes had been saying all along that America must be hemmed in and made to "feel the need of sureties, allies and protectors." The fisheries must go to England and France, and the Mississippi and Florida to Spain.

In fact, it was a question whether genuine independence for America was a desirable thing just then. The English were aware of that state of mind in September, when Grantham was writing to Fitzherbert that "I have reason to believe that even the independency of America, however ulti-

mately advantageous to France would not, if accepted now by the Commissioners, be a means agreeable to her." To which Fitzherbert had replied that "Your Lordship was well founded in your suspicion that the granting of independency to America as a previous measure [to peace] is a point which the French have by no means at heart, and perhaps are entirely averse from."

It was these ways of thinking that Rayneval had undoubtedly been sent to London to advocate; and the reason for it all, just as Jay had suspected, was that France had a secret agreement with Spain binding her not to make any peace with England until Gibraltar had been restored to Spain. And since America had no such understanding with Spain, and since America's withdrawal from the war would have been disadvantageous to the Bourbon allies, it was essential to persuade England that too great a liberality towards America would be a mistake, in order to hinder, and if possible prevent, the progress of America's peace negotiations. It was this intrigue which Jay and Vaughan had sensed and forestalled, while Franklin was still proclaiming his simple faith in Versailles. An intrigue which a Frenchman was one day to describe as a "vile speculation."

There was the magnificent comedy in the face of which Vergennes's injured innocence with regard to John Jay assumes qualities of sublime effrontery. These matters are all public knowledge—they were, even in those days, fairly well understood in certain American circles, as a later page will show—what is disconcerting is that Genet should have affected ignorance of them. In 1782, perhaps. It does not necessarily follow from his position at Versailles that he was kept informed of all these secret manipulations. But in

1792, when, as the newly appointed French Minister to the United States, he was to have access to the diplomatic files appertaining to America and provide himself with long extracts from them—then he must have known, and his subsequent declarations concerning Jay achieve a sublime deception of their own. But in those later, embittered days John Jay was a personal enemy, never to be forgiven for certain public actions; and Genet could perhaps convince himself that the hornswogglery of a defunct and repudiated royal Ministry did not alter the official lack of good faith of the former American Commissioners. He could, and probably did, convince himself that in all these dealings the interests of France were after all the principal consideration. He was always, during his diplomatic experience, to be guided by that principle.

And of course there were always those conversations and those supposedly intercepted letters of Sir James Jay to confuse the mind. Sir James accusing his own brother. That was difficult to forget.

10

America had made peace with England, and France must do the same—never mind Gibraltar now; England had as much intention of giving Spain Gibraltar as of giving her the crown jewels—and in 1783 Genet was sent to London as secretary to the embassy, with secret instructions to gather all the information available prior to the preparation of a treaty of commerce. He was immediately in the thick of things.

"On arriving in this town," he wrote to Breteuil in February, "my first care is to . . . inform [Your Excellency]

of the sensation which the peace preliminaries have caused here. London presents the most satisfactory picture; British pride is really destroyed; but in the midst of this consternation there is a hidden fire which we will soon see burst forth with fury in Parliament. The opposition leaders in both Houses confine themselves to asking for all the papers necessary to support their motions against the Ministers, and their fate now depends only on the decision of Lord North. Up to date he has been inscrutable, and Mr. Fox himself does not know whether or not he will join forces with him [Fox] against Lord Shelburne.

"The English are infuriated to see that by Article 5 of the American treaty the loyalists are abandoned to the mercy of Congress without anything having been stipulated on behalf of those unfortunates who sacrificed themselves for their country's cause. . . . It is on Wednesday that the storm is to break on Lord Shelburne's head. Mr. Fox is to take me to that session."

Two weeks later Genet was telling Castries that "if public rumor is to be believed, the King is himself in the opposition ranks, and it is he . . . who . . . urged Lord North to seek the Ministry. But that action has done the greatest harm to that peer in the national mind. Ever since he has been expected to take control of the Treasury, securities have fallen. The English all look with horror on anything which might jeopardize the peace." And three days afterwards, "Lord Shelburne . . . as well as all the Ministry resigned this morning. The posts are still vacant; but what will surprise you, Sir, is that according to general expectation Lord Cavendish will have the Treasury; in this way Mr. Fox has managed to ruin both Lord Shelburne and

Lord North. It is said that *Milord* Stormont will have Foreign Affairs, and Mr. Fox the Interior."

But on March 1, "it would be difficult to sort out the truth in the chaos of contradictory news . . . concerning the selection of new Ministers. . . . The King has achieved his goal; he has gotten rid of Lord Shelburne, he has made Lord North even more odious to the nation, Mr. Fox has lost his popularity by joining Lord North, and the King . . . is going to triumph and name his own Ministry. . . . He has already caused the Treasury to be offered in succession to Lord Cavendish, to Lord Gower and to the Chancellor Pitt. The two former refused that scabrous post; but Mr. Pitt, full of ambition, forgetting his age, blinded by successes in the career of eloquence, hesitated and still hesitates. . . . While awaiting the outcome of all these cabals . . . business is suspended, finances are in the most critical condition, all the tills are empty, and if the army subsidies had not been granted yesterday it would have been necessary to stop the wages of the troops. . . . There are now in Portsmouth more than two hundred ships prevented from sailing to the two Indies by the mutiny among the sailors."

And a week later, for Breteuil's information, "we are always in the same uncertainty concerning the final makeup of the British Ministry. Lord Shelburne and the members who still constitute the Ministry occupy their posts without exercising their functions. They are afraid to touch those pens that have been so fatal to them, and affairs are in a state of confusion which one cannot describe. The King drifts about in the midst of cabals. . . . The merchants of the City are dissatisfied with the peace and are hurling fire

and flame against the bill to regulate commerce and dealings with America. In short, London was never more agitated, or more angry, or more instructive. It is at this moment, all right, that one can appreciate the English at their true worth, and that one sees unconcealed their corruption, their venality and their bad Constitution."

Twenty years and two months old, exactly, this young Nestor.

11

He saw other things, too. "Since my arrival," he wrote to Vergennes, "I have neglected nothing in order to profit from the permission you deigned to grant me, and I summon all my efforts in order to make myself worthy of the kindness with which you have loaded me." He would send him notes of the debates in the House of Commons, and for Castries he suggested reports on the British navy. For whatever the extent of the English desire for peace, "I think, Sir, that it would be important to follow very closely at the present moment the operations of the English fleet. A few days ago I was in various Thames shipyards and it did not seem to me at all that [armament] work had been suspended as abruptly as they would like to have us believe. . . . During my stay here, Sir, I will have the honor of informing you as regularly as possible concerning everything which I may consider worthy of your attention."

And there was stirring news from India. "The India Company," in April, "has just received fresh dispatches of which it has not yet published extracts; but from what is known it seems that Admiral Hughes's ship is taken or lost. The letters from Bengal are terrifying. It is said that five

hundred thousand Indians have again been victims of the rice monopoly, and if one may believe the current rumors the employees of the Company are in open civil war. The English all recognize that these events are the natural result of the bad constitution of their government in India . . . where they flatter themselves, but in vain, that they will one day make an empire as powerful as was the one in America." And a few days later, "the fall of Madras seems inevitable, and this town, reduced to the most fearful extremities, is only waiting for Mr. de Suffren to arrive in order to surrender. . . . The last battle cost the English more than six hundred sailors, and people insist that Mr. de Suffren would have obliged Admiral Hughes to surrender with a part of his squadron if three vessels had not abandoned [him] at the hottest moment and forced . . . that gallant general to fire with one broadside on those who were deserting him and with the other on the enemy. . . .

"[These] events . . . will probably hasten the downfall of the India Company, and it is possible that you might soon hear of the dissolution of that Company whose vicious administration . . . and the rapid fortunes made by those called nabobs have rendered it odious to the entire nation."

And at the same time he was inspecting Oxford and Cambridge; he was making a tour of the Channel ports; he was buying books on India and on the war in America, to be translated by the bureau "if you do not disapprove of my purchases and will allow me to make new ones;" he was studying "distilling chimneys" and packing one up to take back to the King; he was growing fat, according to Villoison, and taking up again his reading of Greek and of the literature of the North; he was visiting Birmingham in the com-

pany of Watt and Bolton, and he would "never forget that amongst the various applications to which both Watt and Bolton told me they could apply steam power was that of navigation." He "submitted to Mr. Watt a memorial which I had just presented to the Academy of Sciences of Paris . . . on the subject of steering balloons by . . . steam, and both he and Mr. Bolton told me that they considered the idea philosophical and practical."

And in Birmingham he met Dr. Priestley who performed experiments for him on air and gases "of which I sent an account to the Academy of Paris. . . . And on my return, having attended at one of the sittings of the Academy, I was surprised to hear" the great Lavoisier "read a paper which was nothing but a repetition in different words of Priestley's experiments which I had reported." And Lavoisier "laughed and said to me, My friend, you know that it is not always those who start the hare who catch it."

Genet shunned society and presentation at Court, occupying himself rather with scientific matters, and collecting English implements unknown in France, such as the cannon harpoon for whales and the screw augur; and, privately opposed as he was to the treaty of commerce, which that same Rayneval was negotiating, until France should first have developed her manufacturing and engineering resources, he secured permission from his Ministry to invite Watt and Bolton to France, and had the satisfaction of seeing the latter established there.

And of course his regular work besides. Tremendous treatises on the whole history of the American Revolution, with special regard to the pernicious workings of the Stamp Act; fat comparative reports on the commerce of England,

France and America; and "I hope . . . soon . . . the continuation of the work which I am preparing for your [Castries] eyes on the finances of England."

A perfectly astounding industry.

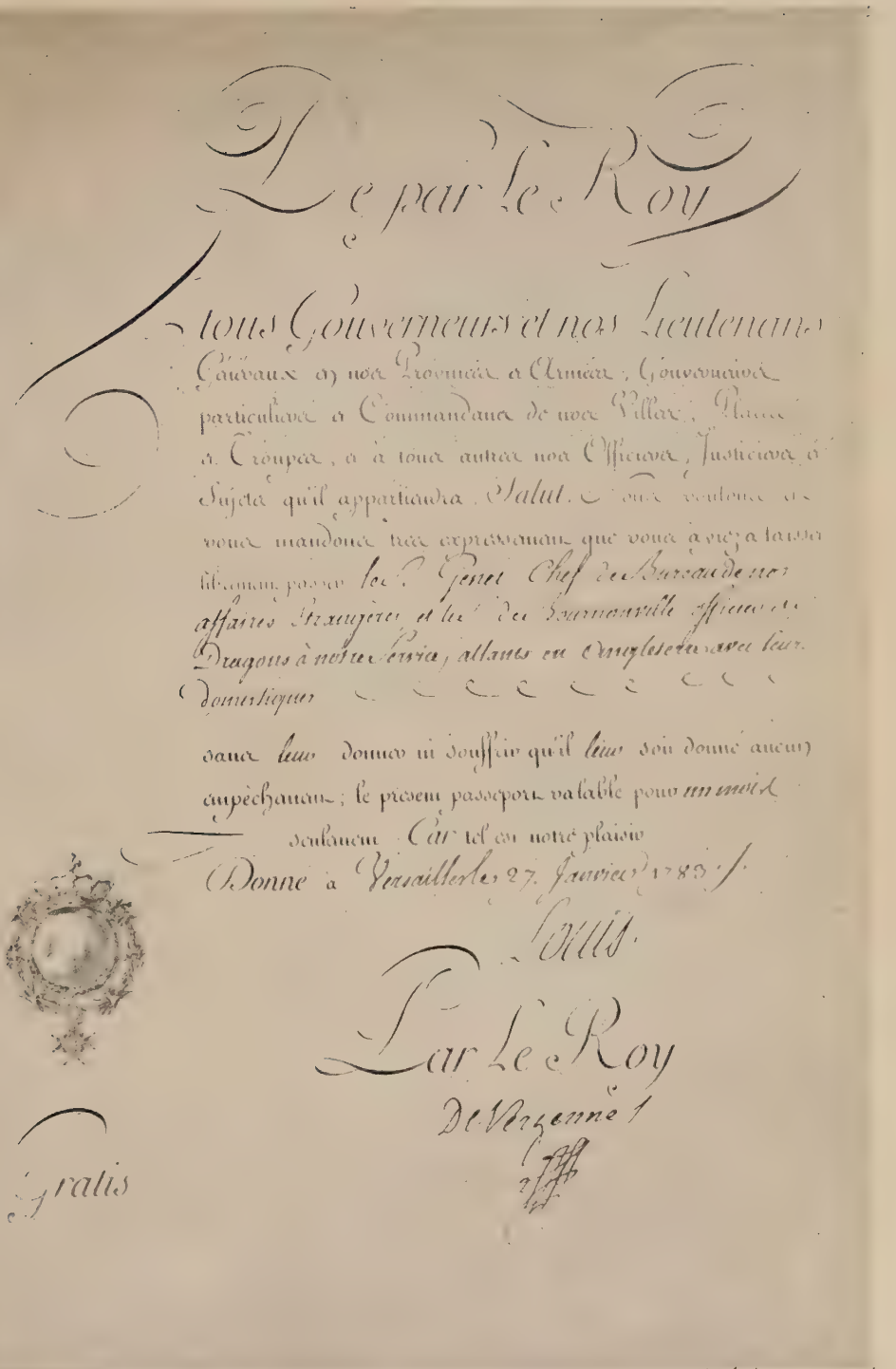
12

Back at Versailles, and things were changing. *The Marriage of Figaro* had at last been played to a roaring audience. Calonne was at the Treasury in place of Necker. The months went by, and Julie had another little boy to sing to sleep—"Charlot," who was to pass like a little lost ghost into History, the Seventeenth of his line—and later on the last little Princess who did not live through the year. There were royal visits—the "Duke of the North," who was the Grand Duke Paul of Russia, and who did not mind it at all when the *Moniteur* printed scandalous paragraphs about the Empress, his mother, whom he detested; although the Queen had sent in a great hurry for Genet to have the paragraphs suppressed. Mr. de Fersen once in a while, very correct, very much in love.

All out of a clear sky, in 1785, a distracted jeweller named Boehmer making incomprehensible statements to Madame Campan, and through her to the Queen. Suddenly, on August 15, while the Court was waiting for the ceremonial Mass of the Assumption, Breteuil ordering the arrest of the Cardinal de Rohan, Grand Almoner of France. Then the vile business of the diamond necklace, all the Rohans, Soubises and Condés up in arms, the trial at Paris—and Rohan shamefully acquitted. A deluge of pamphlets calumniating the Queen. A constant murmuring in the city.

Genet did not have to be told that these scurrilities were unfounded. He had come in contact with the Queen on many intimate occasions. From Vienna, through Madame Campan, he had sent her the original quatrain written upon the occasion of her birth by the Italian poet Metastasio, as the result of a wager lost to the Empress Maria Theresa concerning the sex of the expected child. After his return from London, he had prepared for her a memorial on the British system of government—the mainspring of which, it seemed, was corruption—and Marie Antoinette had been very much impressed, exclaiming that "such a crown was a crown of thorns," and had helped embroider insects and flowers on a waistcoat for him. And during the American war the Queen had sent for him to come into her bedroom, to discuss with him the means of preventing the Americans from putting a certain captive British Major Asgill to death in reprisal for injuries done to American prisoners. Genet had approached the Queen's couch, and she had "appeared to me like a goddess."

And "by what I know of her most secret history, she did not deserve the horrid imputations charged against her character. She was amiable, charitable, desirous of doing all the good she could to France"—Genet was being very charitable himself, long afterwards—"but unfortunately her education had been extremely neglected as to what ought to constitute the science of those called by their birth to rule . . . a knowledge of history and of mankind. Her leisure hours were employed in reading novels, or in enjoying the pleasures of music"—he did not mention the theatricals at Trianon—"and when the terrible events of the Revolution took place they found her unprepared to assist her husband



De par le Roy

Tous Gouverneurs et nos Lieutenans Généraux de nos Provinces et Armées, Gouverneurs particuliers et Commandans de nos Villes, Places et Troupes, et à tous autres nos Officiers, Justiciers et Sujets qu'il appartiendra. Salut. Comme nous voulons et nous mandons très expressément que vous ayez à laisser librement passer le Sr. Genet Chef du Bureau de nos affaires Etrangères et le Sr. de Bournonville officier de Dragons à notre service, allans en Angleterre avec leur Domestiques

sans leur donner ni souffrir qu'il leur soit donné aucun empêchement; le présent passeport valable pour un mois seulement. Car tel est notre plaisir.

Donné à Versailles le 27. Janvier 1783.

Louis.

Par Le Roy

De Vergennes

Gratis

GENET'S PASSPORT TO LONDON, IN 1783

Signed by the King, Louis XVI, countersigned by Vergennes, Minister of Foreign Affairs. Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the possession of the Library of Congress.

by prudent and energetic advice, though after all she displayed in several circumstances during that terrible tempest more courage and resolution than he, and in all probability would have saved his life, if not his crown, if he had followed her advice."

And now Vergennes was dead, and Calonne at his purse's bottom. If in 1783 all the tills in England had been empty, so now was the Treasury of France, and all the American bills to be paid. And Calonne imagined that something might be accomplished by summoning the Notables—for the first time in some two hundred years—all the foremost representatives of the nobility, of the clergy, of the parlements, of the municipalities from all over France. *Figaro* and the Notables—dangerous precedents perhaps. They gathered, early in 1787, to consider matters in committees, and Calonne wanted a stamp tax. The committee presided over by the Count d'Artois called for a report on the English stamp tax, and Genet was sent for.

"After a whole night of labor" he went to the Prince's apartment where they were sitting—La Fayette was of their number—and presented his report, strongly opposed to the tax. And Artois was not pleased, and shut him up, but the Notables seemed impressed. La Fayette especially "seemed to eye me with approbation," and the next day when they met at Rochefoucauld's the General said to the lieutenant of Dragoons that "you are very young, but you behaved yesterday like a man." But the Notables failed to accomplish anything, and dispersed. Calonne went out and Loménie de Brienne came in. He had some notions, but the mutinous Parlement of Paris refused to register them. The States-General, they insisted, must be convened, and it was

Monsieur himself, "aspiring it is supposed to popularity," who maintained that the Commons should be given double the representation of the Nobles and Clergy. The Revolution was coming very fast. In the meantime, in August, economy—it was the Notables' belated idea—economy everywhere, and the Bureau of Interpreters was abolished. There were those who whispered that the disgruntled Artois had had his finger in it. No Clerks in Chief who did not approve of stamp taxes.

Genet was out of employment, reduced to a temporary pension. Away off in St. Petersburg, Mr. de Ségur was asking for a furlough from the embassy, and Genet applied for the post of Chargé d'Affaires. They got the Queen to speak to the King about it, and the thing was done, with some very nice letters which Her Majesty secured. Marshal de Ségur at the Ministry of War to his son, Madame de Ségur to her husband, the Princess de Lamballe to her friend the ambassador.

He provided for his mother "with everything that was necessary for her comfort and welfare at a genteel country seat that I had leased for her at Montreuil . . . a place that I had very much improved," planting it also with trees from America, for the reason that he had been "enflamed from my youth for the cause of liberty in the United States." Then for the occasion they made him a captain in the First Colonel General Regiment of Dragoons; and in the late fall of 1787 he went rolling away from Versailles, *Service du Roi,* to Paris, and out through the Germany Gate down the long white road.

The King, Monsieur, Artois, Madame de Lamballe, Mr. de Fersen, the two little Princes and Madame Royale, the

Queen, bountiful pleasant Lady of his boyhood—he was never to see any of those people again, never again to behold the splendor of the Kingdom of France in the great shining galleries of Versailles. Perhaps he did not even turn around for a last look. He was very young, not quite twenty-five. He was going to Russia, Service of the King. The roads were long.

CHAPTER IV

DILECTISSIMA CATHERINA

1

GENET passed through Frankfort, where "the amiable" Miss d'E—— was still Miss d'E—— and very glad to see him; and stopped for a while at Warsaw. Long enough to commit his first official impudence. The King of Poland—what there was left of it—Stanislas Poniatowski, was very fond of music, and particularly of French light operas, and took a fancy to the young Dragoon's voice, causing him to sing French songs to him on all occasions. Indeed, "one evening at a large party at his sister's, Madame de Cracovie, he effectually kept me two or three hours at the piano, and exhausted all my repertory." Genet got bored, a little offended in his dignity—he was not over-much impressed, in any case, by this comic-operatic King of Poland on sufferance—and it occurred to him to sing a song from a French opérette purporting, as everyone well knew, to satirize a monarch of dubious standing. "Is he King or isn't he?" the young man's voice filled the room. "If he isn't, why call him King?" Everyone got the point, "several pretty loud laughs were heard," the piano-forte was closed abruptly, and His Very Christian Majesty's

Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg went on his way, extremely well pleased with himself.

At Vilna there was heavy snow, and the carriages had to be changed for covered sleighs, "large cradles on runners in which you lie stretched as in a bed." Genet travelled night and day, carrying his own supplies and using his own cook as otherwise warm provisions were not to be had. At Riga he refused to break a prior engagement for dinner at the house of an English merchant in favor of the Governor's official invitation, because of the sentiments of democracy "which already had possession of my heart"—he had been thrown always at Versailles with the literary, philosophical, advanced groups—but a compromise was hit upon by eating both dinners, although the Governor "spoke several times rather sarcastically of my want of appetite" on top of the English roast beef and plum pudding. And at last he was at St. Petersburg, welcomed by one of his father's old clerks in Mr. de Ségur's own carriage.

He arrived in January, 1788, and Ségur wrote home that "his form, his bearing and conversation, correspond perfectly with the eulogies that have been made of him in all the letters he has brought me." And his presentation to the Empress Catherine II was a great affair, spiced from the start by an unexpectedly intimate circumstance. "I went with the Count to Court," he recorded, "where I was presented to the whole Diplomatic Corps previous to the return of Her Imperial Majesty from the Chapel. . . . She was engaged in conversation with Count de Ségur when Count Osterman mentioned my name and character to her." And then—"she stretched out her hand as usual, but looking at me attentively she indicated a surprise which was noticed by all those who

were present." Afterwards "I was informed it arose from [the fact that] it had pleased Divine Providence to establish a perfect resemblance between her late favorite, Count Landskoy, and myself; in addition to which I wore the brilliant uniform of the First Regiment of Dragoons...which was very similar to that which Landskoy used to wear." Everyone remarked on the resemblance, and at least one tradesman was convinced that he had seen a ghost.

It was a good beginning; Genet had been noticed. The Empress liked him—she always liked handsome young Dragoons—she gave him diamond knee buckles. He got along very nicely right away.

2

Ségur was to have gone home, but now Russia and Austria were again at war with the Grand Signior at Constantinople; Prince Potemkin on land, and on the sea the Prince de Nassau-Siegen and Rear Admiral John Paul Jones, were soon to be opposing the Turkish Captain Pasha; Prussia and Sweden were threatening; and Ségur decided to stay for a while, keeping Genet with him as secretary of the legation.

They watched the European pot boiling, listened to all the intrigues, saw the coming of the victorious war with Sweden, observed the progress of the Turkish business, realized that Rear Admiral John Paul Jones was having a jealous time of it, and formed their own opinions concerning the Prince de Nassau-Siegen. A noisy, and frequently successful, adventurer who, born in France, had fought in the Seven Years' War, gone on a cruise with Bougainville around the world and had amorous experiences with the Queen of Tahiti—a circumstance which made of him the ob-

ject of a most enthusiastic interest on the part of the ladies of St. Petersburg.

And Rear Admiral John Paul Jones—they were obliged to occupy themselves with him too, in 1789, and get him out of his allegedly scandalous scrape. "For pity's sake," Ségur had to write to Potemkin, "obtain permission from Her Majesty to save Paul Jones, a celebrated man, from the shame of a lawsuit which is always unfortunate when it makes public the errors of private life, always dangerous when the accusers are coached by [personal] enemies." And the suit was dropped, although later the Empress could only say that "this Paul Jones was a mighty hard specimen, and very worthy to be feted by a collection of detestable characters."

Although the private conduct of certain members of the Imperial family was none too edifying. "Discord has spread its fearful poison," Genet was to report in 1791, "in the household of the Grand Duke [Paul] and Grand Duchess. This unhappy Princess, betrayed by her husband, shut up with her rival in a country house in the midst of snows and ice, had no other consolation than that of confiding her sorrows to a friend [Baroness Benkendorff]. The Grand Duke objected to having her spend in crying with this confidant . . . the nights which he was devoting to his unworthy *amours*."

He discharged the Baroness, and "the Empress publicly condemns her son, but in private she is not at all sorry to have him damage himself in public estimation, and insure tranquillity for the close of her reign by alienating [from himself] the sentiment of the people. . . . All those who are attached to the old Court take pleasure . . . in casting

the greatest disfavor upon this Prince; they even go so far as to say that his mind is impaired; a supposition which will soon be capable of confirmation if the Nelidoff [his mistress] is being paid to lead him on into all manner of excesses, which persons attached to the Grand Duchess imagine to be the case. It is certain that the Empress is not fond of the Grand Duke; that she fears his restless nature; that she knows that he disapproves of everything that she has done . . . and that she would prefer to divide her crown between her two grandsons." The Grand Dukes Alexander and Constantine, whose education she had taken entirely into her own hands.

And incidentally, Genet begged the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to stop allowing extracts from his dispatches of this nature to be printed in the *Moniteur,* copies of which eventually found their way back, awkwardly for all concerned, to Russia.

The scandals continued. "The Empress . . . summoned the Grand Duke home from the country. She had an interview with him as mother and sovereign, and they insist that the Prince answered her neither as son nor as subject." He had complained afterwards "of being surrounded by spies and traitors; he repeated several times that he saw perfectly well that they wanted to subject him to the same fate as Peter III [his father], but that he would have himself preceded into the grave by twelve persons whom he considers his enemies."

This was that brooding, morose, perhaps partly insane Paul, who as Czar was to be murdered in a palace insurrection; a Prince who is reported once to have made a quite superb remark, namely that "the only individual of im-

portance in Russia is the individual whom I address, and only while I am addressing him;" and the fate to which he was referring was that murderous visit paid by the Orloff brothers to his father's prison cell, at the close of the revolution of 1762 which had placed Catherine upon the throne.

But as Voltaire had said, "I know that she is reproached with some trifles about her husband, but these are family affairs with which I do not meddle."

3

1789, and some extraordinary things were happening in France. Brienne had gone, and Necker had come, and gone, and come again. The States-General had met, and a body of men calling themselves the National Assembly had taken an oath in a covered tennis court at Versailles; troops had gathered hastily, and under their noses the populace of Paris had stormed the impregnable Bastille. Artois had fled across the frontiers. In the countrysides, chateaux were being burned. Mr. de Ségur decided to go home. He would leave Genet behind in St. Petersburg.

"He is a very distinguished young man," he wrote, "and I dare to say very important to keep in the King's service. To advance him will be a useful service to His Majesty. He is in all respects suitable. He unites agreeable talents with profound knowledge. He is erudite without pedantry, bright without conceit, his logic is just, his zeal indefatigable, his wit ornate, his manner of thinking noble and attractive. I dare to assure you, Count [Montmorin], that a Minister at the head of your department will find few persons whom he can attach to himself or employ actively with more profit and less annoyance. . . . I have given him since he has been

here excessive work, and the more I become acquainted with him the more I find him to be a great treasure to sustain and employ."

It was a nice official testimonial, but one may not overlook Ségur's subsequent, private estimate. "I found him," he recorded, "witty, educated, speaking several languages and gifted with some agreeable talents, but he was very hotheaded." Always "a boiling activity."

Already in those days he was touchy, this boy, easy to excite, quick to get on his high horse, quick to fly off the handle without counting up to ten, quick to use his sharp and very clever tongue. His family had known it, and reproved him for it. He rushed in sometimes, all in a tantrum, pushing the prudent angels aside. At any rate, he was already betraying the simmering blood in his veins; the jealous, rebellious quality of his youthful attitude towards any disparagement of his importance as a representative of France; his impatient scorn of men who were not attuned to his own swift, vigorous, forward moving instincts, to his own deep, ceaseless absorption in the furtherance of what they called in France the "public concerns." A very earnest young man, imbued with zeal, saturated with energy, extremely meticulous with his dignity, which was, after all, his country's. And a Frenchman pure, with a Frenchman's cold passion for logic, a Frenchman's local devotion to the sole interests of his fatherland.

Ségur went away, in October—he was not to return—and in that same month a great unkempt rabble of women and men came screaming up from Paris, down the long road to Versailles, and broke their massacring way at last into the Palace, on a night of shouting, and tramping, and smashing

doors. And when it was all over, they went screaming back again, taking the royal family with them. The King, Monsieur, Madame Royale, the Dauphin, the Queen, Madame Campan, Adelaïde—they would none of them ever again behold the splendor of the Kingdom of France in the great shining galleries of Versailles.

And a song all over Paris.

"Ah ça ira, ça ira, ça ira!
Malgré mutins tout réussira!
Ah ça ira, ça ira, ça ira!"

Ça ira—everything is going to be all right—the famous phrase launched some ten years before, during the darkest days of the American Revolution, by that good Doctor Franklin. And in St. Petersburg they were remembering what Count Osterman had said to the French Ambassador in 1778. Let the King of France beware, lest he become the first victim of independence and liberty. Those American inventions.

4

It was a busy, nerve-wracking time. The uncertainty at home, settling down gradually to the spurious tranquillity of the dingy Tuileries. Genet's sisters were there, as usual, at their traditional duties. He heard from them, no doubt, and of all these untraditional proceedings. If anything more happened, they would be there, in the midst of it. And in St. Petersburg there was so much to do, so much to listen to, so much to report. Alliances and negotiations, battles and truces, and the death of an Emperor. Commerce, and a system of secret agents to watch the Russian navy. Austria,

Poland, Turkey, Prussia, Sweden. Spies again everywhere. England. Long, long dispatches, in the numerical code. Longer, perhaps, than they need have been, for one was still very young, very much impressed. The midnight talk of embassies, during the last decade of the eighteenth century.

The death of Potemkin in 1791. "That man whom the favor of Catherine II had raised to the level of her throne, and who held her in submission; that man who precipitated war in order to satisfy his personal ideas, and who, seeing them unfulfilled, would have been glad to behold all Europe in flames; Prince Potemkin, in short, is no more. . . . He is regretted neither by the people who rightly looked upon him as the author of all their ills; nor by the nobles whom he humiliated continually. . . nor by the Grand Duke who saw in this all powerful Prime Minister a rival for the throne, all the more dangerous. . . in that secret ties united him to the Empress. . . . That Princess . . . is the only person who mourns him. She fainted upon hearing the news of his death . . . they were obliged to bleed her . . . the entire Court is in the greatest agitation."

They had received his remains with "honors similar to those which might have been ordered for the corpse of a sovereign. . . . No one . . . presented so many contrasts as he. Ambitious and lazy; humane and sanguinary; energetic and undecided; desiring everything and planning nothing; a witty man without education; loving his country without appreciating his people; occupying himself with serious affairs and with follies; treating bagatelles with importance and the greatest interests with indifference; frequenting the Court without enjoying it; forever running after pleasure

without ever escaping boredom; jealous of power and leaving everything to be done by underlings; thoroughly aware of all the vices of the administration and tolerating them more than anyone else; greedy and wasteful; fastidious without taste; magnificent without elegance; ostentatious without generosity; galant without charm; sometimes a man sometimes a child; sometimes sociable sometimes morose. He would have passed simply for a bizarre person if fortune, chance and the favor of Catherine II had not made a famous man of him."

Catherine herself, in June, 1791. "The whole nation is groaning; nevertheless in the midst of the precipices which surround her glory and her greatness, Catherine II affects a serenity worthy of her character. Her Court was never more brilliant or more gay. . . . Almost every day a selected society gives itself up . . . in the very throne room to little children's games, and that sovereign who rules so many different peoples like a great man . . . who alarms so many nations, does not refuse to animate those pleasures by her own example, and seems to invite her subjects to share her own security. She thinks that she has provided for everything, and it is true that her genius has performed miracles."

And Catherine again, in November of that year, and "the gigantic ideas on which [her] conceited old age is nourished." That "vain and haughty woman. . . imagines that nature has placed no limits on human greatness. . . . She indulges in the most frenzied ambition, but she fails to see the abyss which is ready to open up under her feet." Genet saw it, for several pages, and it was revolution, by the peasants, by the nobles, by the Grand Duke Paul, "that somber Prince, rest-

less, vindictive, discontented with his position, offended by his unimportance." But "unfortunately the Empress's pride convinces her that she can still cope with everything. Potemkin was lazy, bizarre, but in spite of all his faults that man was the real keystone of the arch, and his fall has already staggered the empire. Anarchy is at its peak, the intrigues of the Court are so numerous that the most experienced courtiers have difficulty in picking their way through them. . . . The nation murmurs."

And then he wrote a paragraph and erased it. "Besborodko [at Foreign Affairs] soft, insinuating, has no other merit except that of knowing how to hornswoggle the Empress...but except for that he has no talent whatever, he runs after pleasure and affairs run after him."

They must have smiled just a little, once in a while, at the Ministry in Paris. Or frowned. Fortunately the numerical code was pretty safe. But "moderate if you can that boiling character," Montmorin's successor was to advise Genet. For while the dispatches were entertaining, and "I should perhaps have written them at your age," still "I cannot sincerely approve them at my own."

5

1790, and out of France there came from all this recent chaos something tremendous, something magnificent, something that America had taught them all. So it seemed to the Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg, in the eager, trusting flush of his youthful idealism, yes, and of his bureaucrat's loyalty. The King had accepted a Constitution, as again in 1791 he was to accept a further revision of it. All the diplomatic agents of France were required to swear al-

legiance to it. It was the King's will, and the King's pleasure. To Genet, as he registered his civic oath, it was also the King's glory.

He could not know, this far away young man—as his sister, Madame Campan, seems to have known—that it did not mean anything, that it was a gesture on the part of the King, that at the Tuileries, in the Palace, it was all rubbish, this Constitution. He could not know—as his sister, Madame Campan, most certainly did know—that the King and Queen were all the time scheming and hoping for a foreign intervention by force which would throw this precious Constitution into the waste basket. If, as Madame Campan relates, it was true that Montmorin at Foreign Affairs, "initiated in all the true secrets of the King," directed his agents officially to uphold the Constitution and "in his confidential correspondence [directed them] to pursue a conduct entirely the reverse"—if it was true, Genet paid no attention to these ministerial machinations.

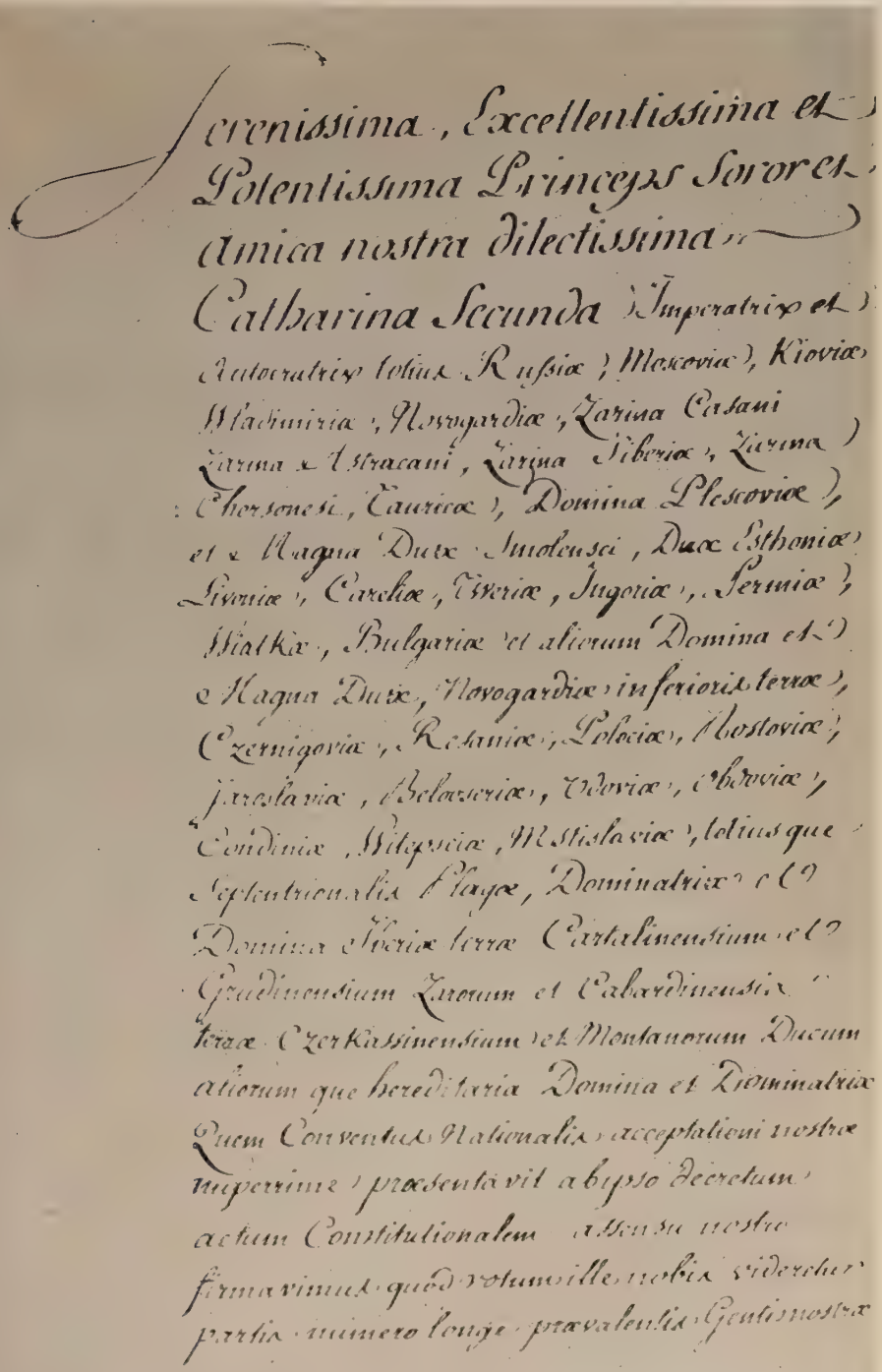
The Constitution was the law, the King had himself sworn to maintain it, it was the part of all true Frenchmen to obey the King, to uphold him in this splendid innovation in which His Majesty so patriotically concurred. Actually, it was to be the irony of Genet's situation—when one remembers the whole background of his upbringing and family traditions—that his very loyalty was in the royal circle to be a treason, his very obedience a rebellion, his outspoken admiration an exasperating stupidity.

Indeed, it was to become, in 1791, a very active peril for Madame Campan, who was then constantly at the Queen's side, performing for her "commissions that were as secret as they were important." One can imagine the sort of thing,

those furtive messages from the Tuileries to the outside world, all the threads of that intrigue with the foreigners who never came. Only Mr. de Fersen, who came and went, until even he could come no longer. And the known attitude of Madame Campan's brother was turning people at Court against her, and causing them to demand the dismissal by the Queen of the sister of the man "who had ranged himself publicly under the standard of revolt." For so, Madame Campan admits, "they designated the conduct of those who attached themselves to a law which the King had himself accepted." But the Queen was able to silence their suspicions by announcing that it was through Madame Campan herself that she had first been frankly informed of young Genet's stand—for a letter had come from St. Petersburg.

His sister had written to him, evidently; hinting something of the true state of affairs; remonstrating with him; pointing out the embarrassment of her own position. And Genet never gave an inch; he had taken his stand, in accordance with the royal instructions, and now the law was the law, approved by the King. There could be no stumbling on that path, the secure path of obedient officialdom. Genet sat right down and sent a letter to Henriette.

"My dear sister," he told her, "I am aware of your respectful and deep attachment for your august mistress; those sentiments entirely control your actions; they are praiseworthy and should not suffer any change. My position is different from yours; a citizen of France, charged with the honor of representing my country, I must do so in accordance with the laws prescribed by the Constitution which the King has sworn to maintain, and in support of which I have also given my oath. Never speak to me in your letters



Serenissima, Excellentissima et
Potentissima Princeps Soror et
Amica nostra dilectissima,
Catharina Secunda, Imperatrix et
Autocratrix totius Russiæ, Moscoviæ, Kioviæ,
Wladimiriæ, Novogardiæ, Zarina Casani
Zarina et Astracani, Zarina Siberiæ, Zarina
Chersonesi, Tauricæ, Domina Plescoviæ,
et Magna Dux Smolensci, Dux Esthoniæ,
Livoniæ, Carelliæ, Tveriæ, Jugoriæ, Permiæ,
Wiatkæ, Bulgariæ et aliorum Domina et
Magna Dux, Novogardiæ inferioris terræ,
Czernigoviæ, Rezaniæ, Polociæ, Rostoviæ,
Jaroslaviæ, Belozeriæ, Udoriæ, Obdoriæ,
Condiniæ, Witepscie, Mstislaviæ, totiusque
Septentrionalis Plagæ, Dominatrix, et
Domina Iveriæ terræ Cartalinensium et
Grudinensium Regum et Cabardinensis
terræ Czerkassinensium et Montanorum Ducum
aliorum que hereditaria Domina et Dominatrix
Quem Conventus Nationalis acceptationi nostræ
nuperrime præsentavit abysso decretum
actum Constitutionalem assensu nostro
firmavimus quod votum ille nobis videbatur
partis numero longe prævalentis Gentis nostræ

THE CIRCULAR LETTER OF LOUIS XVI, KING OF FRANCE, TO CATHERINE II, EMPRESS OF RUSSIA

Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the Genet papers.

hunc quidem eventum eo celerius Majestati Vestræ Imperatoriæ nunciatum voluimus, quo magis sensibus amicissimis, quibus ea nos regnum que nostrum prosequitur infidimus: Ut vera Majestas Vestra nulla dubitet quin nova Status nostri ratio amicitiæ nostræ erga ipsam nec non unioni inter Regna nostra feliciter subsistentis minime prorsus noceat ab ea Serenissima, Excellentissima, et Potentissima Princeps, Soror et Amica nostra dilectissima Catharina Secunda enixime rogamus. Dabamus Lutetiæ Parisiorum Die Septembris vigésimo anno restauratæ salutis Millesimo Septingentesimo nonagesimo primo, Regni vero nostri decimo Octavo.

Bonus Frater
Vester atque Amicus

Louis

Montmorin.

of the opinions that divide Frenchmen—who would be happy if, like myself, they realized that the welfare of their sovereign and of their country resides only in the maintenance of the Constitution.

"An advanced sentinel, I remain here ready at all times to give warning of any conspiracy against my country"—it was in the days of the *émigré* plots—"I do so with all the more zeal, because I believe myself to be serving the true interests of my sovereign. Place my letter at the feet of the Queen; I think it necessary that it be through you that she be made aware of the resolve to which my sentiments as a French citizen and my profound and respectful devotion to the true interests of my sovereigns alike constrain me."

There. And they were not angry with the young deserter. "The King continued, as did also the Queen, to confide the most important missions" to Madame Campan, and "the good King. . . said to me one day that the constitutional reputation of Genet gave me a similar one in the eyes of many people; that it was very convenient, and served the confidence which I had not ceased to merit, since I found myself as a result of these unjust suspicions [of constitutionality] freed from the annoyances and inquisitiveness of the chiefs of the Revolution." So that, by his support of the Constitution, Genet was now assisting his sister in her opposition to it! And the Queen said that it was a good letter, and that, while she feared that it might hinder Genet's advancement in the royal service—the good Lady had her very dense moments—still it proved him to be a man of sincerity.

And probably at first this had been true. Edmond Charles Genet was no barefoot *sans culotte* with nothing to lose, trailing his vociferous republicanism through the royal

apartments. When he had chosen to uphold the Constitution, to range himself with the patriots, to splash a discordant crimson across the whole white background of his life—he had done so sincerely enough, because he imagined the King to be in earnest. But later on there was another reason. The clerk in chief in him came to the surface, the State functionary who strives to keep his place while Ministries and Governments come and go. His was inevitably a loyalty to the career, to the bureau, to the desk with its routine, and not to the policy or the individual of the moment once that moment had passed. He had adopted the Constitution because that was the King's wish, a wish that sustained his own inclinations. But it was not to be in him to abandon the Constitution when it was no longer the King's wish, because then it was irrevocably the wish of the majority in control. "I know very well in what ship I ought to be," he was one day to confess to his sister. "But I saw it founder; it was impossible for it to escape, and I did not have the courage to remain aboard. Blame me for it, if you dare; as for me, I will praise all those who did the same."

It was a little sad, a little ungrateful—Adelaïde's and Henriette's young brother—but "blame me for it, if you dare."

6

1791, and some very remarkable dispatches from Paris.

"The King, Sir, absented himself from Paris during the night of the twentieth and twenty-first of [June], and the uncertainty in which the National Assembly finds itself as to the place to which His Majesty has withdrawn has decided it to issue [certain] decrees enclosed. . . . P. S. It was learned last night that the King was at Varennes near

Stenay, and that he was on the point of leaving to return to Paris."

Thus the brief, coldly official announcement of that event which had had the whole of Paris by the ears, and the nervous dismay of which still trembles in the reticent sentences. The flight of the royal family to Varennes; the great adventure planned by the Queen and Mr. de Fersen; planned, and carried out to within a few miles of safety, and ruined by a man who recognized a face and rode like mad into History through the dark Argonne woods to head off the fugitives.

They brought them back with indignities across a furious countryside, down the Champs Elysées to the dreadful Tuileries again—between files of troops with arms reversed, policing a perfectly silent crowd—and St. Petersburg heard once more from Paris.

"I have to inform you, Sir, that the King returned to Paris last Saturday. . . . The agitation and tumult caused by his absence and return have so far prevented the National Assembly from taking the steps which the gravity of the circumstances require: but the Assembly will soon occupy itself with them. If, as may happen, considering the present state of affairs, the Court to which you are attached should manifest the intention of recalling its Minister here" —the intention was soon to be made effective—"I beg you to drop the necessary hints in order to prevent it from doing so, and to invite it at least to delay any decision until matters have taken a fixed and settled turn."

They were terribly worried, the King's Ministers, but a month later Montmorin was more reassured. "It is natural to suppose, Sir," he wrote to Genet, "that the present state

of our internal affairs is making a very great sensation all through Europe, and it is possible that, through ignorance, people are condemning the provisional precautions taken by the National Assembly; but the ferment, especially in Paris, was such that the Assembly could not have acted with too much circumspection and prudence in order to prevent an explosion the effects of which would have been incalculable. The firmness and prudence of the Assembly have impressed the trouble makers, and it has just established the fact that, being inviolable, the King could not be held to account for his departure"—and everyone breathed more freely.

"This first step insures the monarchy"—for a moment there had really been question of it—"in spite of the uproar made by a misguided group, and it will no doubt soon be followed by further measures which will restore matters to their normal state and bring back order and tranquillity."

Actually, they had little more than a year left to them at the Tuileries, before that "misguided group" should send the populace of Paris crashing into the palace for the last time.

7

And now everything was wrong in St. Petersburg.

It had been awkward enough at the time of the King's adoption of the Constitution. For Catherine II would have outwardly nothing to do with Constitutions. She did not like the word. Although in private she did not hesitate to expound the document to her grandson, the Grand Duke Alexander—the boy who was to be the Czar of the Peace of Tilsit, of the burning of Moscow and of the restoration of the Bourbons—and "does not this fact," Genet remarked, "show that this woman, as a writer and as a philosopher,

at the bottom of her heart approves our new laws, and that as a sovereign, a despot and a politician she has adopted the course of declaring herself hostile to them?"

But Varennes was too much. This royal family manhandled by its subjects, shut up in the Tuileries; this King who was, in her opinion, no better than a captive of his own people—Catherine II could have no patience with that. What if the idea should occur to some of her Russians? She broke off diplomatic relations with France, she persecuted any liberal movements in her own empire, she expelled from it all French citizens who would not swear fidelity to the principle of monarchy, and she forbade Genet any further access to her Court—at a public audience in which she ordered him to withdraw as being the representative of an imprisoned King. That was what seemed to annoy her most, that the King of France should have allowed himself to fall into such a fix, and thereby diminish the dignity of kingship.

Genet, from where he stood in the ranks of the Diplomatic Corps, talked right back to her, addressing the Empress of all the Russias without the slightest diffidence, and told her that his credentials were still in force, that the captivity of the King, as alleged by her, was not a fact, and that in refusing any longer to recognize the King's Chargé d'Affaires she was insulting His Very Christian Majesty. Then he retired, and put it all down in writing for her Ministers—and received a superb calling down from his own Foreign Ministry!

"What you have experienced, Sir, at Petersburg," Montmorin informed him, "Mr. de Noailles had also experienced at Vienna. The same thing has happened in almost all the Courts of Europe." He should have limited himself to ver-

bal protests, and not have put them down in writing and so run the risk of disagreeable replies. He should have kept still and waited until affairs had quieted down. And as for the secret negotiations concerning France between Russia and Austria which he was claiming to have discovered and to be trying to frustrate, "you could not hope to hinder them by acting on your own hook. . . . I have no doubt, Sir, that you will admit that you have taken too much upon yourself. . . . This affair is too delicate for you not to fear to act on your own responsibility, considering the great distance at which you are from Paris."

Well, there he was, completely cut off from the Court—Catherine's Ministers had orders to accept no communications from him—and now in Paris they were pestering him to secure formal delivery to the Empress of the King's letter announcing his adoption of the revised Constitution of 1791. One of a batch of letters prepared for every Court in Europe; all in very magnificent Latin, this one to *"Serenissima, Excellentissima et Potentissima Princeps, Soror et Amica Nostra, dilectissima Catherina Secunda,"* from her *"Bonus Frater. . .atque Amicus Louis"*—signed apparently with his own hand. But, as had happened at the Papal and Swedish Courts, Catherine would not receive it, would not allow her Ministers to touch it. No letters from imprisoned monarchs.

Genet's correspondence was full of references to it for the next few months. "The Empress of Russia," he wrote in December, 1791, "appears to have really joined hands with the Pope and with the King of Sweden for the purpose of refusing to receive His Majesty's letter. . . . I can understand, Sir, how a Pius VI, who loses everything by our revolution, and whose duty it is to perpetuate the prejudices and

superstitions which sustain his tiara, persists in disbelieving in the King's freedom in order to invalidate acceptance of the letter. I can also understand how a Prince [the King of Sweden] who is delirious with despotism expresses the bitterest hatred [for France]. But the more I read the decrees of Catherine II, the more I admire her laws, her writings, the more I am pleased with the benefits which her sweet philosophy has spread throughout her Empire, the more her genius appears to me to approach that of a divinity, the less [her attitude concerning the letter] is comprehensible to me."

The dispatch reveals his very considerable lack of religious feeling; his already very pronounced democratic tendencies; and perhaps, from its tone of flattery, his habit of sending uncoded communications through the mail in order, in this manner, to make himself heard by the Empress. For, as he advised his Government, "there remains at my disposal the treachery of the post office as a means of causing my observations to reach the Empress, and it is with this in view that I shall have the honor of writing to you in clear."

But he was not able to deliver the letter. "My situation," he was still reporting in February, 1792, "is unchanged, the letter which the King wrote to the Empress... is always in my hands." It remained in his hands, and still exists, a curious document, in the Genet papers.

8

It was a really very perplexing situation for the young Chargé d'Affaires. The Empress would have nothing to do with him officially, and called him a "demagogue"—although in private she tried to persuade him to enter the Russian serv-

ice, and bestirred herself to have parties given for him—and her Ministers were obliged to follow the imperial cue.

"I am always dead politically," he wrote home, "and I await with the calmest resignation the day of my resurrection or of my transfer." His affair was making a tremendous sensation; "some condemn me, others approve; people were found at Court bold enough to defend me openly; but it is especially in the Guards' regiments that I have found friends; almost all the young people are for me, and I take the greatest care to avoid them too. . . . [Until instructions are received] I shall not frequent the Russian Ministers or high society." There were all sorts of rumors—one of a French plot to assassinate the Empress—and his movements were watched night and day. "My house is surrounded with spies; they follow me everywhere, and I am glad of it because the more they watch my conduct the more they will blush for the injustice of the suspicions levelled at me."

In fact, he advised the Governor of St. Petersburg, "Mr. Genet—being [positively] informed that for a month past police agents have been following all his footsteps, have been trying to obtain [information] from his people...and are beginning, by their clumsy searches, to attract the curiosity of the neighbors—has the honor to advise [the Governor] that he has given orders to all his staff to give an exact account, not only of his public but also of his private actions, to all persons who may desire to be acquainted with them. Mr. Genet has never feared, does not fear, and will never fear any sort of inquisition; he is only grieved to learn that in Russia, during the reign of the immortal Catherine II, it still exists. He had imagined that these petty methods were resorted to only by those unfortunate Princes who are beset

with fears." And they could show that to the Empress, and welcome.

In the meantime, he sent to Paris such reports as he could—concerning the foreign coalitions against France, concerning the activities at Coblenz and elsewhere of the *émigré* French Princes and their agents—and forwarded his contributions to the national defense. The more enemies there were—and all Europe was astir with armed intervention—"the more I feel my patriotism on fire. If I were not kept here by my duty, I would fulfill another and fly to the defense of our frontiers." But at least he could send money. "I had some superfluous belongings, I have just sold them." A valuable watch and a silver sword. He had also written to his mother to turn in the gold medal given to him by the King of Sweden. And he had been promised a "gratification" by the Ministry, "but I beg you not to send it to me. The State needs that money, and a strict economy will do instead of that gift for me."

This was a fine, patriotic abnegation—perhaps actually not so warmly appreciated in royalist circles—and he carried his head well up in St. Petersburg; but it would all have been easier if his own Ministry had not seemed to have forgotten him completely. There were no acknowledgments, no instructions, no replies. He could not know that in many instances Montmorin was not even bothering to open his dispatches any more. And he took his pen repeatedly and told the Ministers what he thought of it.

"You acknowledge neither my letters nor my money. I communicate to you everything that I know, I offer to the State everything that I possess. . . . I confess to you frankly, Sir, that it is infinitely painful to me not even to

know whether my dispatches and my patriotic contributions reach you. You have not given me a sign of life [*for two months*] and it is only from the gazettes that I had the great satisfaction of learning that you still exist." In fact, "the department of Foreign Affairs behaves towards me in the same manner as those images of the Gods to which good people speak without ever receiving any reply. The silence of my household deities had disgusted me with praying in my childhood, and I tell you frankly, Sir, that the silence of His Majesty's Ministry would in the same way disgust me with diplomacy if you were not to be so kind as to put an end to it."

And he would a thousand times more prefer "to till the soil and gain my living by the sweat of my brow than to serve the State in a diplomatic capacity if we do not possess a definite policy. I am tired of always wandering along the narrow paths which have been laid out for us since the death of Mr. de Vergennes. The quick succession of our half measures, of our procrastinations, of our negligences, ruined our former monarchical Constitution, and I would become an accessory to the ruin of the one which the nation has just adopted if I were to remain enrolled under the banners of our new diplomacy without having assured myself that its policies and its energy will be equal to its resources. . . ."

And he had already written to say that "the most important question now fills all my thoughts. Here it is. [Am I a trouble maker or a good citizen, faithful subject of His Majesty, *erased.*] Those who obey the King's orders are they his enemies, and those who disobey His Majesty are they loyal subjects? The patriotic sentiments which I have

expressed, the contributions which I have made . . . my conduct at this Court, these are so many grievances which call down upon me . . . the most painful reproaches from Coblenz"—where the runaway royalists had their headquarters —"and even from Paris. I am accused"—he was of course receiving letters from all sides attacking him—"of ingratitude towards a Prince who has overwhelmed me and my family with kindness; I am charged with fanaticism, with republicanism"—the *émigré* agents were telling the Empress that he was "a crazy little fool."

"I confess to you, Sir, that all this is calculated to surprise me. I go down into my heart, I consult my conscience; I read your dispatches over, and I see that I have said nothing, written nothing, done nothing which is not in accordance with the instructions which you have given me. . . . It was according to your orders that I took my civic oath, and that I pledged myself to recognize the sovereignty of the nation; it was according to your instructions. . .that I became imbued with the spirit of the Constitution. . . . It is in order not to act without your instructions that I remain at a Court where I am treated. . .as a discredited envoy. It is then to you, Sir, that I must apply in order to obtain from the King a formal endorsement to justify me, or a definite retraction which will cause all these wrongs to fall back on you if. . .by any chance you have made use of your authority to make me play the infamous role of an impostor at this Court."

It becomes clear that Genet was beginning to see through the double dealing at Paris, to understand that he had been made a dupe by his own sovereign, and that for his desertion

of the Court party he did not even possess the excuse of the King's sincerity towards the Constitution. But the law was still the law; he was on firm ground; he had done nothing but obey instructions. Throughout his career he was to obey instructions. Obedience, and the courage of obedience—was there any other virtue required of a public servant? He was to learn the answer in America.

"I await your reply with impatience, Sir," he went on. "I hope that you will not refuse it to a man who has sacrificed himself to the interests of the State out of civic duty, out of obedience to the orders of the King whose mouthpiece you are, and out of a trust in your loyalty, but if I should be mistaken I warn you, Sir, that I will use all the means which our laws and which nature provide to force you to grant me the satisfaction which is my due. My honor is dearer to me than my fortune, than my life, and I am determined to leave nothing undone in order to preserve it intact."

These letters are peculiarly interesting, by reason of the personal embarrassment which they suggest, and for the revelations which they afford of Genet's style in controversy. For there is no denying that his remarks were brash, sarcastic, impertinent and indiscreet. If they had not been busy in Paris with other matters—Montmorin himself giving way to various successors—if they had really been troubling to read his dispatches, they would certainly have sent for him to come home, to the discipline of a monumental dressing down. He simply did not care what he said, this young man, or to whom he said it. He carried the chips on his shoulders right into the Presences, and talked out of turn without the slightest compunction. That his observations were in the main well founded did not detract from the im-

pudence of their expression. It is important to notice, because the young diplomat who did not hesitate to heckle and scold a royal Minister representing the King of France was not likely, at a later date, to mince words with the officials of the American Republic.

9

These upbraidings occurred in the midst of a ceaseless correspondence—however onesided—concerning the turmoil which the events in France had let loose throughout Europe. Genet reported everything that he heard, and there was plenty to hear—with the French *émigré* Princes preparing to issue violent manifestos at Coblenz, and St. Petersburg one of the centers of royalist intrigue, and two other unofficial French envoys disporting themselves at Catherine's Court.

Mr. de Bombelles, former ambassador at Venice, come with a "conciliatory plan" to counteract the violence of the Princes on behalf of the King—but the Empress did not think so much of him, and "our social contract is not susceptible of any change; the King has accepted it and the nation has taken up arms to defend it." And Mr. d'Esterhazy, arrived already in September, 1791; come straight from Mr. d'Artois, Mr. de Nassau, Calonne, "which sufficiently betrays his views." He never stopped inflaming Catherine's vanity, "and persuading her that the terror inspired by her . . . cossacks, by her fire ships, would make our legislators tremble. I know that the Russian Ministers would be glad to see this counter revolutionary agent gone from Petersburg." In fact, in all the salons they did noth-

ing but deceive him unmercifully, "and my friends . . . take great pains to bring me all the confidences which that fairly inexperienced negotiator is imprudent enough to make to them."

And there were some extraordinary enterprises being talked of. European coalitions for the purpose of invading France and "liberating" the King. Perhaps the King had better go on tour, Genet exclaimed, and appear in person in Stockholm and St. Petersburg in order to convince them that he was perfectly free. "Why don't they leave us alone to finish the majestic work that we have begun," he complained. "Let them rely on our loyalty to insure the happiness of the monarch who has introduced us to our rights. . . . We have maintained the monarchical Constitution, Louis XVI is always and has never ceased to be the hereditary representative of France. Let them leave us alone then, all those Princes!" But no—"one must not count on anything in the century in which we are living," and one must not be astonished at an attempt on the part of most of the crowned heads "to re-establish the throne of France on its Gothic foundations, against the King's wish and against the will of a nation whose fourteen centuries of glory should have made known its energy and power."

And what insane schemes. Messenger after messenger to Stockholm and St. Petersburg to enlist support. "They promise [those Courts] powerful aid on the part of the nobility and malcontents of our northern and southern provinces. . . . They propose . . . that a Russian fleet, combined with a Swedish fleet, should go and disembark troops . . . on the coast of Normandy, while the Prince de Nassau

. . . [with] the Black Sea forces is to pass through the Dardanelles . . . go and unite at Malta with vessels from Naples, Spain and the Papacy, sail for [the southern coast of France] and disembark troops to be joined by those of Spain. This army would then march on Paris. . . . The refugeed Princes would invade on their side with their German cohorts. Paris would be surrounded. . . . All that appears very insane, Sir, and yet it is very true."

Unfortunately it did not appear at all insane to the King and Queen of France; on the contrary, it appeared very urgently desirable; and it was dispatches of this nature that were not read.

And the *émigrés* themselves, all those Princes and nobles who had fled from France at the first alarm, and for whom there had been no Varennes. "Europe swarms with all those intriguing emigrants, one would waste one's time keeping track of their misguided footsteps, and one's paper reporting the senseless projects that agitate them." Many of them were said to be coming to Russia, and Genet was glad to hear it for the Academy was predicting fearfully cold weather, and "you can see . . . the wonderful effect which such a temperature will have on such heated heads, on such fanatical spirits."

But it disgusted him too. "For a number of centuries," he remarked, "the glory of our Kings . . . had inspired a passionate jealousy in all the crowned heads, but our formidable bulk had worn out their hatred." Now "there is not a Princeling, not a Kinglet, who has not had the conceit to pronounce himself the King's protector, who has not prided himself on being the support of a monarch of whom he had

never dared to speak except in trembling. . . . Almost all the Courts have reasoned that way. And consequently the insignificant negotiators who fill Europe with their intrigues have been welcomed, overwhelmed with honors. . . .

"They say . . . that His Majesty's consent [to the Constitution] was obtained by threats, that everything that he has done is null and void, and that the King's friends must not pay any attention to anything that emanates from the prisons of the Louvre"—and in November, 1791, Genet still would not believe that. "The Empress has been stirred by the exaggerated pictures continually drawn for her of Their Majesties' situation." Ambitious and deceitful men "have caused the Cabinet of Petersburg to be regarded as the soul of their enterprises. . . . Their spokesmen have exercised their eloquence in proving that this century would bear the name of Catherine II if under her auspices . . . the feudal system and fanaticism were re-established."

Count Romonzow had "allowed himself to be fired by their sophistries; the aristocratic fever took hold of him. He replied speech for speech. He did more. The wine of the Rhine flowed bottoms up at his house in honor of Catherine II. The Prince de Nassau . . . recruited eight cooks of the first rank at Coblenz; by their art rubles were converted into Mayence hams, into *gigots à la braise* and into eel pasties. Our poor Frenchmen formed an opinion of the efficiency of the Russian artillery from the strength of the fire in the kitchen of Monsieur the Admiral of the Flotilla; the counter revolution appeared certain to them with such support, and imbeciles will believe in it as long as the Empress will not permit His Majesty's letter . . . to be received from my hands."

456. 970. 1018. 470. 512. 774. 192. 178.
avés en ordre de faire vous ne vous
620. 1128. 678. 854. 508. 222. 170. 1117. 254.
bornés à en rendre compte. Cette
652. 534. 143. 444. 1147. 72. 864. 512. 352.
affaire est trop délicate pour que vous ne
1140. 534. 58. 290. 620. 138. 512. 18. 508. 296.
deviés pas craindre de la distance où vous
1091. 608. 598. 886. 332. 168. 360. 294. 246.
êtes d'ici de parler de vous même et de
192. 36. 622. 788. 512. 794. 600. 192. 302.
nous faire tenir à Petersbourg un
1016. 292. 506. 774. 870. 332. 827. 56. 886.
langage différend de celui qu'il nous
492. 874. 1098. 1151. 526. 452. 512. 292.
conviendra de tenir dans les différentes
1104. 874. 1032. 229. 1196. 292. 870. 1068.
cours qui pourront adopter
816. 1151. 526. 852. 832. 474. 58. 326. 896. 382.

MONTMORIN, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TO GENET

In the French Foreign Ministry numerical code; interlinear translation by Genet. "I do not doubt, Sir, that you will recognize that you have taken too much upon yourself. . . ." Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the Genet papers.

712. 816. 481. 220. 1141. 332. 106. 514. 1414. 880.
le considerations que le Roi a mises sous leurs
356. 828. 10. 974. 650. 895. 1166. 816. 677. 168.
yeux et reflechir sur les suites que pourroit
220. 58. 466. 1069. 79. 617. 1118. 282. 270. 1174.
avoir toute tentative qui auroit pour but de
820. 465. 882. 112. 31. 512. 958. 1162. 886.
donner la loi à une grande nation qui
1139. 332. 1112. 503. 264. 420. 574. 694. 87.
s'occupe à faire des changements dans ses
209. 220. 219. 332. 774. 556. 41. 598. 576.
gouvernement. Je ne doute pas, cependant,
251. 605. 576. 198. 671. 246. 889. 220. 192.
que vous ne reconnoissiez ~~que vous~~
198. 10. 919. 188. 958. 508. 220. 192. 332.
~~reconnoissiez~~ que vous avez trop peu sur
270. 861. 778. 619. 192. 828. 220. 193. 48.
vous et que quelque soit le résultat des
422. 1095. 556. 129. 895. 220. 670. 120.
nouvelles communications que vous

But she herself was "actually the only person in Russia who still held to the idea of attacking the Constitution. . . . Her favorite, most of her Ministers and the entire nation disapprove of this senseless project"—and so, in her very private and not at all unintelligent diplomacy, did the Empress; but Genet could not know that, could not guess that she was egging on Austria and Prussia to interfere in the West so that, in her own words, "I may have elbow room." He only knew, because the Court banker had told him, that she had already given more than two million *livres* to "the brothers and relatives of the King . . . *the descendants of Louis XIV.*" Perhaps one of his best sarcasms.

And as for the King of Sweden, that other mainstay of despotism, he was said to be going to Aix all prepared to crush France, armed "with the formidable pike of Odin, the invincible sword of Charles XII. . . . People maintain that the Prince de Nassau's eight cooks will join him there . . . with their skillets and their carving knives, but I have not yet been able to confirm this latter fact. All I know, Sir, is that . . . those two Paladins appear to love each other today as much as they hated each other formerly. There is nothing like a great affair to bring great men together."

Whatever else was in him, Genet already had the laughter of the Revolution, that magnificent gaiety of consecrated causes, that unbelievable arrogance of forlorn hopes. One can see in him already that superb conceit of the tattered armies of the Republic that were so soon to flaunt themselves in the face of an embattled Europe behind a thunder of drums; and there was to his impudence a quality that rendered it sublime.

10

Bombelles, D'Esterhazy, police spies, secret agents—they were all after him, trying to persuade him to join the Princes, offering him inducements of every sort, conspiring to ruin him when he refused. "The *émigrés* have done everything they could," he reported, "to discredit me before the Empress. They have declared that I was in correspondence with the Jacobin Club, that I had the mission of stirring up trouble in Russia"—he was to hear the same kind of thing later, again, in America, for it was to be his fate always to inspire turbulence and uproar— "[and] they have neglected no effort to corrupt my secretary in order to secure the key to my code . . . and persuade him to confess things that do not exist."

And since there was intriguing everywhere, he did some of his own. For in January, 1792, he was writing to a certain personage that "you will be very astonished when you see that it is to ask you for a conference." He had had a "happy idea" concerning the French Princes, and "it is essential that I should speak with you about it; but it is all important that no one here should suspect that I have seen you. I therefore suggest to you . . . to leave your house tomorrow morning on foot . . . wrapped up in a big fur cloak . . . to go to a public sleigh stand, to hire one and to say to the driver . . . take me to Crasno . . . [a cabaret] on the Peterhof road. I will drive there myself at the same hour, and there, Sir, I hope to prove to you that if my opinion concerning the French Constitution differs from yours my *hereditary* devotion to our Princes does not fall short [of yours] in any respect."

And the personage replied that "my known devotion to

the King . . . does not allow me to abstain from any opportunity of furthering the reestablishment of his authority. . . . I will therefore be present at the place which you indicate, and you will permit me to withhold [until then] any opinion which may result from so extraordinary a transaction." And the next morning at Crasno, various gentlemen in St. Petersburg would have been extremely startled if they could have seen Mr. Genet and Mr. d'Esterhazy alighting at the door, all muffled up to the eyes.

But it had nothing to do with reestablishing the King's authority. As related in full detail by Genet to his Ministry, the meeting was for the purpose of suggesting to d'Esterhazy a task in which he might more profitably employ his time, namely to arrange matters with Russia so that Mr. d'Artois might be elected to the throne of Poland—a scheme which seemed excellent to d'Esterhazy "in the event that the counter revolution should not occur in France."

Genet wished him "all the good luck possible for this enterprise, and we parted without anyone knowing of our meeting." And "my object, Sir, in undertaking this transaction, was to turn Mr. d'Artois away from the chimerical projects that he is pursuing, and to present to his mind an objective really worthy of his attention; namely to justify the journey which they say he is about to undertake to come here and see the Empress, and to cause those very persons whom at present we look upon as our enemies to lend their support to policies the result of which would be to give to our country the greatest influence in the North."

But Artois was not to be King of Poland, but on the contrary, after many royal deaths, King Charles X of France. For they were to see their Tuileries again, those

Princes; but only after many days, and with many absent faces.

11

Genet had already been mixed up in a similar business during the first troubles of 1789. For having been charged with the promotion of an alliance between France, Russia, Austria and Spain, he had "conceived the idea of accelerating the realization of that project in order to save the monarchy—not by means of vile and perfidious intrigues, not by means of the despicable support of foreign troops, but by means of one of those great and noble methods which the Roman Senate always employed successfully whenever internal troubles were disturbing the Republic—by means of a war which would have been popular, and would have carried the most illustrious revolutionary partisans to the [enlistment booths]."

France had just suffered a bitter diplomatic reverse in Holland, brought about by the Anglo-Prussian "league," and through the very secret mediation of the Prince de Nassau-Siegen Genet contrived to persuade the Empress to "declare herself openly against the league and to [agree to] place that Prince upon the [Dutch] Stateholder's seat." This idea had met "with the greatest success," and Genet had been commissioned by Catherine herself to promise Montmorin that if France would send an army against Holland she would send sixty thousand men against Prussia.

But "that feeble Minister of the even more feeble Louis XVI" had refused; he had ordered Genet not to go any further into the matter, since the King was contemplating only economy and peace. And so another opportunity to

alter the history of Europe had been neglected. Nor did it seem to occur to the eager young diplomat—or to the matured man reporting the episode long afterwards—that the transaction might itself, from a Dutch point of view at least, be classed in the category of reprehensible intrigues.

12

1792, and France was at war with Austria and Prussia, the Russian armies were tramping over Poland, in Paris another screaming mob had invaded the Tuileries and subjected the royal family to a long agony of indignities. And on July 8 the Russian Ministry wrote to Genet to tell him that "the disorder and anarchy which for some time have prevailed in France at the expense of legitimate authority . . . and which manifest themselves every day in new outrages, have finally decided the Imperial Russian Court to interrupt relations and correspondence . . . with that Kingdom until such time as the Very Christian King shall have been reinstated in the rights and prerogatives which divine and human laws ascribe to him. . . . The Empress . . . feels . . . that the presence of *Sieur* Genet . . . has become not only superfluous but even intolerable. Consequently Her Majesty's Ministry is instructed to announce to *Sieur* Genet that he is required to leave this capital within the space of eight days . . . and to depart from Russian territory as promptly as possible."

Dismissed by the sovereign to whom he had been accredited. He went cheerfully enough; and he could not foresee that he was still to experience—only two years later, in America—that other culminating disaster to a diplomatic career, repudiation and recall by his own Government.

They gave him every facility, every courtesy, every convenience for his two carriages—in one of which he placed all the embassy archives, with his secretary, Moissonnier, to look after them—and in August he was at Warsaw, where "the attentions of the Russian Government were not able to spare me the spectacle presented today by Poland to the eyes of a sincere friend of liberty and national independence."

And now what? "I beg you, Sir," this was still from St. Petersburg, "to explain to the King"—he had only a month more left to him at the Tuileries, that unfortunate—"to explain to the King that inactivity is the only evil that I dread . . . and that should His Majesty not find any opportunity for the present of making use of my zeal in State affairs, I should be delighted to go and resume my Captain's rank in the Corps of Dragoons. . . . The State has the right to dispose of my life and of my slight talents, and the two careers that I follow give me the double advantage of being able, in defense of the noblest of causes, alternately to take up the pen and the sword."

As a matter of fact, there were to be no Dragoons, and the consummation of his father's very highest ambition for him was in store. He was nearly done with the post roads of Europe, and away in the West the Ocean was awaiting him.

CHAPTER V

SENTENCE OF DEATH

1

COME to Paris right away, they told him, for there was work to do. "Your mission being ended at St. Petersburg," Lebrun, the new Minister of Foreign Affairs, wrote to Genet, "do not lose an instant; make your preparations to return to Paris as quickly as possible. Your known patriotism, and the distinguished talents that you have developed during your residence at Petersburg, are titles too precious not to require me to present you with new means of serving your country usefully. Hasten to come to the capital where I will see you with great pleasure since I destine you to a new mission in which I am sure you will acquire new rights to the gratitude of your fellow citizens."

To Paris, then, with the two carriages, and Moissonnier still guarding the archives. And Genet sent a letter on ahead to his sisters, Henriette Campan and Adelaïde, advising them of his return, of his continued affection and of his devotion to France. The chronology is a little obscure, but it is probable that he was then already aware of the terrible day at the Tuileries in June, the day of the mobs

and the red bonnets. Perhaps he was afraid for his sisters. That sort of thing could happen again. At all events, the letter went off—destined, by a dramatic chance, to save their lives on the final day of the August disaster, in the last breathless seconds of time.

And in October, 1792, he was at Paris.

2

And in Paris what had not happened!

The Tuileries had been sacked; the royal family, fled to the National Assembly for shelter, had been timorously surrendered to the insurrectional *Commune* of Paris and shut up in the Temple—in the dungeon tower of the old palace of the Knights of Malta of which Artois had been proprietor, and which the Queen had so often been after him to destroy, for she could never abide it. "Oh tear it down, Artois!"

The fearful massacre in the public prisons had taken place—Montmorin was one of the victims, charged, in part, with his failure to open Genet's dispatches—and the mutilated corpse of the Princess de Lamballe had been dragged unmentionably through the streets, her head upon a pike. The invading Austrians and Prussians had been turned back for a while at Valmy, and the Republic had been declared. There were drums all the time and the bellowing of rabbles, a constant passing of plumed hats and tricolor sashes, a bewildering repetition of new names. Marat, Hébert, Danton, Robespierre. A violence of speech every night at the Jacobin Club. At the National Convention—successor to the Assembly—the deputies from the Gironde, from the regions around Bordeaux, imagined themselves to be in power. One looked for old acquaintances and they were dead; one

knocked at the doors of familiar houses and they were empty; one spoke of habitual amenities and they had vanished. One tried to remember to say Citizen. One pretended to be very confident, very secure, very undismayed.

In Genet's own family circle the disaster had been complete. He found them all huddled together at Beauplan —the country place owned by his sister Julie and her husband Rousseau—"in a state of consternation, ruined, refugees outside the walls of Paris." All the royal emoluments lost, the home at Versailles abandoned, two of his sisters, Henriette and Adelaïde, still trembling from the shock of those dreadful events which they had witnessed.

For they had stayed with the Queen all through the last days; one of them, Adelaïde Auguié, right up to the very last second. "My lioness," the Queen called her, for having held a door against the mob at Versailles, in October, 1789, while Her Majesty found refuge in the King's apartments. And in June, 1792, they had both been there at the Queen's side, and again on the fatal August 10 during the storming of the Tuileries. And Genet could thank his stars that he had sent that letter, for Adelaïde and Henriette Campan had been on the point of being slaughtered on the staircase—hands at their throats and sabers at their necks—when two municipal officers, disguised as members of the massacring Marseilles contingent, came fighting their way through the tumult, looking for them. The letter, delivered in Paris on that very day, had been intercepted by the Police, and they had had the decency to rush it to the Tuileries, all tied up in tricolor ribbons, in the hope of saving the sisters of the patriot Genet. And if they had not done so—if the nation had permitted his two sisters to be killed, two women who had

simply been doing their faithful duty—he let it be known afterwards that he would immediately have abandoned his country forever.

But Adelaïde had not been contented with that. Rescued from the Tuileries, she had managed to push her way in through the howling crowds around the Assembly hall, and to place herself once more at the side of the Queen; serving her as best she might in those wretched little cubicles occupied by the royal family, and by such persons of their suite as had been able to join them—Madame Campan was there, too, for a while—during the ghastly three days of their sojourn in the adjacent convent of the Feuillants. A sojourn subjected to every domestic inconvenience, and exposed to every indignity from the populace which could not at all times be excluded. And at the moment of enforced departure for the Temple, just as the Queen was leaving, it was Adelaïde who had slipped into Her Majesty's hand all the money that she had on her person—some gold *louis* that were to precipitate their own tragic consequences.

For at the Queen's trial in October, 1793—one ventures to depart for an instant from precise chronology—she was asked who had given her the money, and an order was issued for Adelaïde's arrest—her husband himself having already been imprisoned. The soldiers came to Beauplan, but Adelaïde had escaped, across the fields on a donkey, and concealed herself in Paris. But the strain of the terror stricken weeks had been too great—the execution of her royal Lady, her husband at the fatal Conciergerie prison, her brother-in-law Rousseau perished under the knife—she lost her mind, and was found one day in 1794 under the window from which she had thrown herself. Two days later, by one of

those grim human ironies, Robespierre was on his way to the scaffold—it is said that his tumbril crossed her little funeral procession—and Mr. Auguié was free, asking everywhere for his wife.

Such were to be the sacrifices offered by that family to the republican brother's France. But in those days he was far away and his own head, as well, had been marked for the guillotine.

3

But in 1792 what they wanted Genet for in Paris was to make him ambassador to Holland. Adjutant General of the armies, and Minister Plenipotentiary to Holland, to try and negotiate an alliance with America, England and the Dutch. And for a while he imagined that he would go there, although he thought the alliance premature, and received offers of passage in "an excellent British packet of ten bunks," lately chartered from Holland to France to carry horses. But by the end of October, putting off his demands for active service, they had sent him on a special mission to the Republic of Geneva—something to do with the removal from the French border of troops summoned from the Cantons of Zurich and Berne—and when he returned to Paris there were other matters in the wind.

From the very first he had been received by the authorities "with the most honorable testimonials." Indeed, he must have been looked upon as a great catch, so to speak, this young man from the royalist side with his superior training and his long diplomatic experience. But for the accident of certain projects, and in more stable times, he might very readily have found a permanent place in the very highest

councils of government. As it was he was welcome, and immediately intimate, in the ruling circles of the Girondist party; sought after by such men as Brissot, the journalist of fifteen years before, Roland, Condorcet, Vergniaud, Lebrun and Dumouriez—the victorious General who was later to go over to the enemy, and concerning whom Genet was "satisfied from many reflections that he made that the Republic was not at all to his liking, and that he hoped to establish a dictatorship or an executive like that of the United States"—frequently to be seen in the salon of Madame Roland.

A circle, as Madame Campan saw it, "composed of people of superior mind and of very amiable women," presided over by Madame Roland who "shone by the dignity of her manners, the superiority of her mind and the extent of her knowledge." Truly "a Roman lady adorned with the graces of an amiable Frenchwoman." But of course the Genet ladies would have nothing to do with these people—these anti-monarchists, however respectable and amiable—and Genet agreed. "Women devoted to the Queen could not decently mix in the society of Republicans." So this very closely bound family faced its divided allegiances and solved them with a scrupulous tolerance.

But he himself could mix in that society, an avowed Republican among his compatriots; and while Gouverneur Morris, the aristocratic American Minister to France, was to tell President Washington that "I have seen Mr. Genet and he has dined with me. . . . He has, I think, more of genius than ability, and you will see in him at first blush the manner and look of an upstart," and that "he chose America as being the best harbor during the storm, and . . . he will

not put to sea again until it is fair weather, let what will happen," Madame Roland, for her part, found him admirable. "I saw Genet," she wrote, "I desired to see him again, and should always be delighted with his company. His judgment is solid and his mind enlightened. He has as much amenity as decency of manners; his conversation is instructive and agreeable, and at the same time free from pedantry and affectation. Gentleness, propriety, grace and reason are his characteristics. . . . Besides being already conversant with diplomatic affairs [he possesses] all the moral virtues and all the information that could render him agreeable to a serious people."

4

And the thing on every tongue, in November and December, was the question of putting Louis XVI to death. The Jacobins wanted it, those extremists of the "Mountain" who sat on the high benches in the Convention; Marat, Robespierre, Saint-Just, Danton, with the yelling *Commune* of Paris behind them. It was necessary, they maintained, for the public safety; with all Europe coalized against France, let the answer, Danton proclaimed—with his facility for saying striking things in a loud voice—let the answer be a King's head thrown in their faces. To the moderate Girondists, still ostensibly in control of the Convention—they had not thought themselves so moderate once, but these lunatic Jacobins were too much—the project brought only horror and the dread of an imperishable national crime. Genet was of the same opinion. Liberty was not to be established by any wanton sacrifice of human life. "With the greatest prudence and caution" he attempted "to

ascertain the feelings of those who still"—but not for long —"held a powerful influence in the National Convention . . . and I ascertained that [the King's death] was viewed with dread by those who finally succumbed to the terrorists."

And since no one seemed to know just what to do—their hearts were already chilled, one suspects, by the dreadful shadow of the "Mountain"—Genet thought of an idea. It was at a little Girondist supper at Madame Roland's, and they had all been very careful to disassociate themselves from the September prison massacres in the presence of an English guest whom they treated "with great attention," and who passed, according to Vergniaud, for a secret agent. Perhaps the one who was later so accurately to report the private sessions of the Committee of Public Safety. And with the coffee they began to speculate upon the fate of the King—the trial must already have been under way—and Madame Roland inquired of Genet what the effect would be in Europe of a sentence of death. "It would," he promptly replied, "gratify the enemies of France who had not forgiven [the King] the acceptance of the Constitution, and the glorious results of the American Revolution."

For when all was said and done, it all went back to America. It was America that had showed the way, and the realization of this fact was not absent from the minds of intelligent Frenchmen. It was known that Thomas Jefferson, during his embassy to Versailles, had been present at some of the preliminary discussions of the movement in France; it had been known to the Ministry at St. Petersburg, and to Genet, that Jefferson, an ambassador to the Court, had "taken part in those councils in which the overthrow of the old government of France was being planned;"

although it was not until later—as Genet was to remind Jefferson in a remarkable document to which reference will again be made in these pages—that Genet was to learn from Jefferson himself, "in the presence of a very great number of witnesses, that it was at a dinner [at Jefferson's in Paris] that, after long debates, it had been decided to give to the French that miserable and impractical, formless and nerveless Constitution [of 1790] which was neither Monarchy nor Republic"—although at the time it had seemed very fine. But in any case, America was to be blessed or cursed, depending on the point of view, for the upheaval in France, and Yorktown had sown the seed of the Tuileries and the Temple.

As for the King, Genet told them, he should be banished. "But where would you send him?" Vergniaud wanted to know, and Genet had his answer all ready. There was only one place—no, not to Turkey, as someone was suggesting—to America. "Those good people," Genet insisted, "are greatly indebted to him for the liberty which they enjoy, and would receive him with open arms." To America.

It made an impression, what he had proposed. Brissot was very much struck by it, and the Rolands asked him to come again and talk to them. "It is not royal heads that we must strike," Roland kept saying, "but royalty." Brissot had just recently been in America. The little pamphleteer journalist of Vergennes's day—now one of the principal men of the "Gironde"—had seen that idyllic country of Crèvecœur's and was enthralled by it. A pastoral land, he believed it to be, the temple of simplicity and virtue, presided over by patriarchs. A land for Rousseau. The soil that had furnished Franklin, and Jefferson, and Washington. Bris-

sot was full of it, America and France, the twin daughters of Liberty. Brissot of the Gallo-American Society which he had founded with Crèvecœur and carried with him over the water. Brissot the negrophile, founder also, in France and in America, of the Society of the Friends of the Blacks which counted among its French members such men as Mirabeau, Volney, Condorcet and La Fayette. Brissot would send the King to America.

There were other conferences with the Girondist leaders —a meeting at Brissot's, at which Thomas Paine was present, where Roland was convinced that in the event of condemnation there would have to be an appeal to the nation —a certain entertainment at Dumouriez's attended by all the important people, very gay with actresses from the Comédie, and Talma over in a corner, and several generals in all their new tricolor finery; an "incongruous party" from which Genet and two of the generals drove away in the same hackney cab at an early hour, "not being accustomed to such orgies." But the thing had apparently been settled at Roland's. The Girondists would stand firm for banishment, and Thomas Paine must write a letter to the Convention suggesting it.

At all events, it was only a few days after Genet's private interview with the Rolands that Lebrun at Foreign Affairs, "asked me how I would like to go to the United States and carry Capet [Louis XVI] and his family with me." And Genet replied "with the greatest caution" that he was "the servant of my country." Brissot was there, and wanted to know what Genet would do with the royal family in America. "Oh," Genet replied, "Capet is passionately fond of agriculture. I will make of him an American

à Paris le 22. juin 1791.

Le Roy, Monsieur, s'est absenté de Paris dans la nuit du 20 au 21. de ce mois et l'incertitude où est l'assemblée nationale sur le lieu où Sa Mté. s'est retirée l'a déterminée à rendre le decret cy joint. Vous voudrez bien vous y conformer et me rendre compte des démarches que vous aurez faites pour remplir l'intention de l'assemblée nationale.

Le Ministre des affaires étrangeres

Montmorin

Le 23 Juin.

P. S. On a appris hier au soir que le Roi etoit à Varennes près Stenay et qu'il etoit au moment de partir pour revenir à Paris. L'assemblée a decreté d'envoyer trois Commissaires au devant de Sa Majesté avec les pouvoirs les plus etendus sur les Municipalités et les Corps administratifs pour le maintien de l'ordre dans les lieux où Sa Majté passera. f.

M. Genet

MONTMORIN, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TO GENET

Announcing the flight from Paris of the royal family and their arrest at Varennes. Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the Genet papers.

planter. Of Madame Elizabeth [the King's sister] a spinster. Of the little girl a Quakeress, and of the Boy a good American Citizen." They all laughed, and "good, good, said Brissot, that is the way one talks these days."

But they talked too much, for there was a servant of Lebrun, a "pale, cadaverous looking fellow with an irascible countenance," who was listening to everything. And reporting it to the Jacobin Club.

5

There, apparently, was the genesis of Genet's nomination to the ambassadorial post in America, and he was himself convinced that he owed the appointment to Madame Roland's suggestion. He was to be Minister Plenipotentiary to the United States, that was the official purpose of his selection, but it was really to convey the royal family to America that he had been chosen. The diplomatic character of his mission was at first only a secondary consideration, and it was in this light that it appealed to Genet. For the diplomatic task he had no great taste. "I realized the risks"—although he did not intend to shirk them—"that I was to run in attempting to oppose . . . the Anglo-Federalist party which controlled President Washington's Cabinet"—so Genet was long afterwards to express himself in another remarkable document addressed in 1831 to Louis Philippe, King of the French.

And in the communication to Jefferson, already mentioned, he was to confess that he had not shared the general optimistic, idealistic Girondist faith in a union between America and Republican France. The American Government under President Washington was not in the least favor-

able to France or to democracy; it was dominated by British and aristocratic interests. Genet had agreed with Condorcet that such a project of union "was still an anachronism," and that "there was neither affinity nor attraction between [the] two governments ever since the monarchy had ceased to exist"—and the point of view was sustained by the obviously royalist and counter revolutionary sympathies of Gouverneur Morris. And Genet had been inclined to think that Condorcet was right when he maintained that Genet would "breathe more easily in the presence of the Grand Turk than in that of the Grand Washington," and that he ought to be sent to Turkey to arouse that nation against Russia and "put into execution plans which [Genet] had formulated to attack from the rear that presumptuous Power which was threatening to seat its Cossacks in our Assemblies."

No, at the outset the American mission as such was not attractive, however much America itself might be alluring. A thankless task, officially, uncertain of results. Genet would have preferred to go to the armies, and might at an earlier date have done so if as a result of his coldness towards Dumouriez he had not suffered from the latter's obstructions. It was the pen, and not the sword, that they were determined to thrust into his hand. But the prospect of serving as courier to the royal family, of seeing that enterprise which he had himself first promoted through to a happy conclusion, that was a grateful duty which reconciled him to the other. It was with the private, personal cause far more than the national, public one in mind that he gave his acceptance. And at Beauplan they were very much opposed to his going. They thought that he was too young, and that he would do better in the army. But they were

glad to think that he was to escort the royal family to a refuge in America. And Brissot himself would have preferred to keep him in Europe, because of his diplomatic experience, but the other thing was more important.

6

But to have succeeded—and France would have approved—the undertaking required a courageous resolution on the part of the Girondists, and this attitude, in the face of the threatening Parisian "Mountain," of the furiously insurrectional *Commune* already suspicious of the plan, was not to prevail. The Girondists were thinkers and talkers, dreamers, gathered many of them from the quiet provinces, middle class men who had seen a vision come to them from America, the precipitators of the Revolution; but they were not executives of firmness and vigor, and it was not by such men as they, easily alarmed and quickly terrorized, that the revolutionary violence of extremists—nourished, all of them, on the fanaticism of the sanguinary rabbles of the Parisian populace—was to be contained. They were the counterpart of that first group in every revolution, the men who open the flood gates and then cannot master the flood. And they were, in this case, in far too great a fear all the time for their own skins—a useless timidity, since they were all, sooner or later, Hébertists, Dantonists, Girondists, Mountainists, to travel the road to the scaffold.

Something might have been accomplished through an alliance with Danton. The great tribune of the people was not fundamentally regicidal. He would have saved the King's life if it had been possible for him to do so without ruining himself; just as Genet was "prepared to do every-

thing that could be done, *without acting foolishly,* in order that exile rather than death should be inflicted upon that unhappy Prince and his family, and in order that generous Frenchmen should imitate the Romans rather than follow the bloody example of the English in their conduct towards their kings." But in order to safeguard himself Danton must have the support of a recognized group such as that of the Girondists; in November he was still negotiating with them in secret; but the Girondists could not abide him, Madame Roland detested him, they would not forgive him, among other things, his passive acquiescence, perhaps his complicity with the unspeakable Marat, in the massacres of September. They repelled his advances, they attacked him publicly with virulence, and a great voice was added to the clamor of the "Mountain."

The trial of Louis Capet began, before Convention galleries packed with howling supporters of the "Mountain," under a constant threat of uncontrollable intimidation—and it was Roland who had to reveal the incriminating documentary contents of the King's famous iron closet, all the intrigue with foreign Powers, only recently discovered at the Tuileries. And Danton himself had said that if he was even brought to trial he was lost. The weeks passed, and in turbulence and riot, with the city arming for further massacres, they came to the voting sessions. On January 15, 1793. Is Louis Capet guilty of treachery to the State? There was no denying it. He had conspired with foreigners—to him, of course, simply his "brother" monarchs, summoned to uphold his inherited rights divine. Yes, unanimously. Shall there be an appeal to the people concerning his fate? And the Girondists were themselves divided. Motion rejected, by

four hundred and twenty-four votes to two hundred and eighty-three. And on January 16, at eight o'clock in the evening—the sitting that was to last for more than twenty-four hours—What sentence shall be inflicted upon Louis Capet?

Genet, then on the point of departure for Rochefort, where a frigate was waiting to take him to America, was present in the box reserved for the *Moniteur* newspaper at the Convention to watch the voting. And "it was the most mournful spectacle I ever witnessed;" the great hall dimly lighted, "crowded by the hired ruffians of the Mountain;" the public galleries crammed, wine being served, and all that mob, men, women and children, yelling threats at the Deputies. "Commotion and excitement." They were to vote one by one, publicly, stating their opinions verbally. A motion requiring a two thirds majority for the death sentence was defeated. The roll call began, and the first Girondist of importance to record his verdict was Vergniaud. He voted, shamefully, for death—the law left him no choice, he explained, but he asked for a delay of execution. Brissot did the same. Many other Girondists refrained from any reservations. Death. The galleries were yelling, the dreadful shadow of the "Mountain" was upon them, and they were afraid. Condorcet, for one, voted for exile, and with him that Convention Deputy from America, that adopted French citizen, Thomas Paine. And in the midst of it all—up on the highest rows of the "Mountain" benches, in the heart of the extremist stronghold where he kept himself—a man stood up, very elegantly, but he mumbled a little, and voted death—and the whole Convention, even the "Mountain," shuddered. For that man was the heretofore Duke d'Or-

leans, he whom the Parisians had dubbed Equality Philip for his ostentatious democracy, and he was the cousin of the King. But his turn was likewise coming, in a not too distant time.

It was on the evening of January 17 that they announced it—Vergniaud was presiding—"The necessary majority is three hundred and sixty-one; three hundred and sixty-six have voted for death." On the following day they revised it a little, three hundred and eighty-seven for death against three hundred and thirty-four. A margin of fifty-three votes out of seven hundred and twenty-one. A little more courage on the Girondist benches, a little more determination and initiative, a little more political sagacity—Danton on their side—and it would not have happened, the Terror itself would perhaps not have happened. And on January 19, Thomas Paine was still arguing for a reprieve. "France has today but one friend," he insisted, "the American Republic. Do not give the United States the sorrow, and the King of England the joy, of witnessing the death upon the scaffold of the man who has aided my American brethren in breaking the fetters of English despotism." But the "Mountain" thundered, and the motion was lost by seventy votes.

The thing was done on the morning of January 21, with a great roll of drums. And the city was very quiet that day, very subdued, very depressed. And until the very last moment Genet was counting on a rescue contrived by the Girondists. And he may have known of Mr. de Batz's daredevil scheme. Genet had two of his secretaries at the scaffold, watching; he himself was at his hotel, with his carriage in the street, postilions mounted. But the secretaries came

back alone, and after dark the carriage rolled away. There was no use waiting any longer. To Rochefort now, and America.

7

There was to be a curious epilogue to all these frustrated plans. The privately intended purpose of Genet's mission to America must have been widely suspected; at all events, that night when he left Paris, his carriage was stopped at the barrier by representatives of the *Commune*—and he an envoy of the Republic with his own tricolor sash—he was taken under escort to the nearest Committee of Vigilance, and his baggage was searched for the Dauphin, now Louis XVII in royalist circles, with whom they insisted that he was absconding. For a while he was in very serious personal danger—his family affiliations were only too well known, and all his conversations with Lebrun—but they let him go, finally, with extravagant republican embraces which he wisely endured.

One would imagine that with the Dauphin and his mother, sister and aunt at the Temple, seen daily by any number of persons, such an anxiety would have been impossible. But the legends were already current about this Boy who was to be the unavowed keystone of all the factional politics of that entire era, since to hold him was to hold all the aces in the endless game of international and party intrigue. And some of the good people of Paris were saying that the real Dauphin was not at the Temple at all, that he had never been at the Temple, that already during the last months at the Tuileries it had been another resembling child masquerading as the Dauphin. And they were saying that

he had been taken to Canada—and it is interesting to recall that at the time of his visit to America in 1841, the Prince de Joinville, third son of Louis Philippe, went to Canada where he took pains to interview a certain elderly alleged half breed with a Bourbon nose, who from that time forth was sent a pension from France. And they were saying, in 1793, that the Boy was being taken to America, and stopping Genet at the barriers. And in 1795 a boy *was* brought from France to America, and Mr. de Fersen knew all about him, and they called him "Leroy" which might mean The King, and he lived, and died, and was buried in Greenwich Village of New York City. But that had obviously nothing to do with Minister Genet's trunks.

The trouble in later days—one must again, for a moment, abandon chronology—the trouble was that there were to be so *many* Dauphins, so many pretenders after the restoration of the Bourbons. Historically the Dauphin had died in the Temple, in June, 1795. Actually, circumstances no less historical, and too manifold to be discussed in these pages, cast every possible doubt upon the genuine, royal identity of that deceased child. These matters must be studied in Mr. Lenotre's painstaking volumes on the Revolution, but the mystery seems to center around the sudden departure from the Temple, on January 19, 1794, of the famous shoemaker Simon and his wife, guardians of the Dauphin. For it is on that night of mists and fog that the Dauphin is said to have been spirited away, on that night that his sister was convinced that he had gone—she was never to see "him" again, not even at the time of "his" death—on the following morning that the child still in the Temple, whoever he may have been, was walled up and kept so segregated for several

months. And it was on that night that the old crone Simon was later to maintain that the exchange of children had been accomplished, by an agent whom she called "Jenais Ojardia." Scarcely a name that one would invent, though no one had ever heard of him. And there was a person of that name, some few details of his life have become known, only the correct spelling was Genès Ojardias.

And in 1816, when Louis XVIII—the "Monsieur" of former days—was on the restored throne of France, the town of Rouen, and with it all the northern countrysides, was in a very agitated state of mind concerning the imprisonment in that place of one of these pretenders. A loutish person, come as he claimed from New Orleans, and who was to be known historically as Mathurin Bruneau. It is not necessary here to occupy oneself with the details of this personage's career, or with the governmental alarms which it evoked. The circumstance of interest to these pages is that Genet, walking into a bookstore in New York during the early period of the Rouen excitement, found himself suddenly in the presence of an individual, a Frenchman, whom he discovered to be the celebrated Billaud-Varenne.

A somber creature, this Billaud-Varenne, with his reddish wig. The man of blood. Present officially, on behalf of the *Commune,* at the September massacres; President of the Convention during the Terror; member of the Committee of Public Safety; signer of almost every sentence of death; arrested, finally, after the overthrow of Robespierre, and preserved with difficulty from the Parisian and provincial popular fury to be deported to Cayenne; amnestied at last, and come temporarily to New York before going to Santo Domingo. The man who had helped to send the Gi-

rondists to the scaffold. But Genet was willing to meet him, he attempted to show him hospitable courtesies, and he asked him a question. He asked him what he thought of this pretended Dauphin at Rouen.

And Billaud-Varenne replied that "he is an impostor. The Dauphin was poisoned; not by us"—that would have meant the Robespierre faction—"but by our successors. The time was come to clear the way to the throne for another, and that other now occupies it." Louis XVIII, the uncle of the Dauphin. And that popular uprising against the Convention in October, 1795, quelled by General Napoleon Bonaparte's "whiff of grapeshot," had been essentially a royalist upheaval, in alliance with some of the revolutionary parties, aiming at the restoration of that Prince since the Dauphin was considered to be dead already.

But at the time of the alleged Dauphin's death in June, 1795, Billaud-Varenne had already been some two months gone on his journey to Cayenne, where he was to remain until 1816. One must suppose, therefore, that he was not referring to the death in the Temple when he spoke of a poisoned Dauphin. He must have been speaking of an act committed before his departure from France, the assassination of the genuine Dauphin long since outside the Temple, for how else could he have known of it—if, indeed, he actually knew anything of it, although it is true that he was left unmolested in the Convention by "our successors" for some eight months after the fall of Robespierre. But these speculations are of no great consequence; Billaud-Varenne's statement is not offered here as a solution, but rather as an additional complexity of a mystery which will probably never be removed from the records of History—even

though the spectacle of Louis XVIII, harassed by pretenders whose clamors he did his best to suppress, and unable to produce conclusive proof of the Dauphin's death without convicting himself of complicity in a fearful crime, is not without its arresting interest.

What is of more consequence, surely, is that Genet should have asked Billaud-Varenne such a question in the first place. For if Genet could have any doubts concerning the status of the Rouen pretender, then it was because he was himself convinced of the possible existence of a real pretender, because he was himself aware of the fact that the real Dauphin had not died in the Temple.

For he was aware of many curious things; of the existence, for instance, in America of another boy who was the illegitimate, kidnapped son of the Count d'Artois. But one must leave him to his little mysteries. They are the marginal notes, so to speak, of family papers. They occur, briefly, in isolated, tantalizing letters, and do not reappear again.

CHAPTER VI

MATCHES BURNING

1

"THE civic zeal with which Citizen Genet has fulfilled the various missions confided to him, and his known devotion to the cause of liberty and equality, have decided the Executive Council to appoint him Minister Plenipotentiary from the French Republic to the Congress of the United States of North America. This mark of confidence is all the more flattering to Citizen Genet in that the French nation prizes highly the bonds which unite it to the American people. . . ."

They had gone ahead with the arrangements for Genet's official diplomatic mission; his nomination had been signed in December, 1792; on January 13 the Minister of Foreign Affairs was writing to Secretary of State Jefferson to advise him that Ternant, the French representative at Philadelphia, had asked to be relieved; and that "Citizen Genet who takes his place . . . unites to a long experience of public affairs a patriotism of the purest sort and the advantage of being especially acquainted with the friendly and fraternal disposition of the French Republic towards the United States. Considering the repeated proofs which he has given

in several important missions of the soundness of his principles and character, I have not the slightest doubt that he will make himself agreeable to the Government of the United States, and help in tightening bonds too long neglected between two nations whose principles and interests present a most perfect analogy." Something which Genet himself did not entirely believe; but with Brissot talking one could not help soaking it in.

And then one of those pleasant paragraphs in which "I must congratulate myself, Sir, that Citizen Genet will find as interpreter of our sentiments for the United States a Minister who, during a long sojourn in France, was able to convince himself of the nation's attachment to the independent American people, and who himself labored with as much zeal as perspicacity to fortify the bonds of friendship and commerce between the two nations. . . . Frenchmen will henceforth indulge without reserve their sentiments for a nation which has outdistanced them so successfully in the search for the true principles of the social system."

2

As for his instructions—his lengthy and quite extraordinary open and secret instructions—Genet was to strengthen the Americans in those principles which had caused them to ally themselves with France in 1778. He was to enforce the existing treaties, and, in particular, "to prevent any arming of privateers in American ports *except on behalf of the French nation,*" and to prevent also the reception in those ports of any prizes "*except those captured by the Republic*"—two definite mandates, based on the treaty of 1778, which must constantly be borne in mind, as they were

to render inevitable and proper much of his subsequent behavior in America.

He was also to negotiate a new treaty; a "national pact in which the two nations should amalgamate their commercial and political interests, and establish an intimate cooperation in order to assist in every way the extension of the Kingdom of Liberty, guarantee the sovereignty of nations, and punish the Powers that still cling to an exclusive colonial [commercial] system." This pact would soon result in "the emancipation of Spanish America, the opening up to the inhabitants of Kentucky of the navigation of the Mississippi, the deliverance of our ancient brothers of Louisiana from the tyrannical yoke of Spain, and the addition, possibly, of the beautiful star of Canada to the American constellation." And however vast this project might seem —nothing was too vast for the visionary Girondists—"it will be easy to put into execution if the Americans are willing, and Citizen Genet must exercise all his energy in convincing them." And while awaiting the moment when the American Government should have made up its mind to adopt this policy he was "to take all the steps compatible with his position in order to foster the growth of the principles of liberty and independence in Louisiana and in the other American provinces bordering on the United States." And for that purpose they were supplying him with a stock of blank naval and military commissions to use as he might see fit, and especially among the Indians who thought very highly of such documents.

In fact, since war with Spain seemed inevitable, it was essential that Genet should "prepare the way for the emancipation of Louisiana," and "your instructions on that sub-

ject leave you nothing to wish for." On the contrary, they obviously gave him *carte blanche,* and another perfectly definite mandate which must likewise constantly be borne in mind, as it was to justify other aspects of his forthcoming conduct. Nor should a frequent misapprehension be permitted to recur. France had renounced all territorial sovereignty in America; the emancipated provinces were not to be added to the realm of France; in the case of Canada and Nova Scotia it was expected that they would become a part of the American federation.

For instance, in the event of a French war with England—it was to be declared in January 1793—Genet was especially instructed to neglect no effort in order to convince the Americans that it was to their interest to join France in seizing Canada and Nova Scotia from the English, and, again, "to add that beautiful star to the American constellation." Such a union should have occurred sooner, and would have occurred but for the intriguing policy of the old French royal Ministry which had considered the possession of those regions by England "as a useful source of anxiety and vigilance for the Americans." Congress had wished for the conquest of Canada before, and now Genet would "find that body disposed to embrace a plan of conquest which would put the finishing touch to American independence. If the United States rise to the occasion, and show themselves disposed to cooperate . . . Citizen Genet will assure them that the [French] Republic will send a formidable fleet to their shores, and landing forces the commanders of which will have orders to combine their operations with those of [the American] troops."

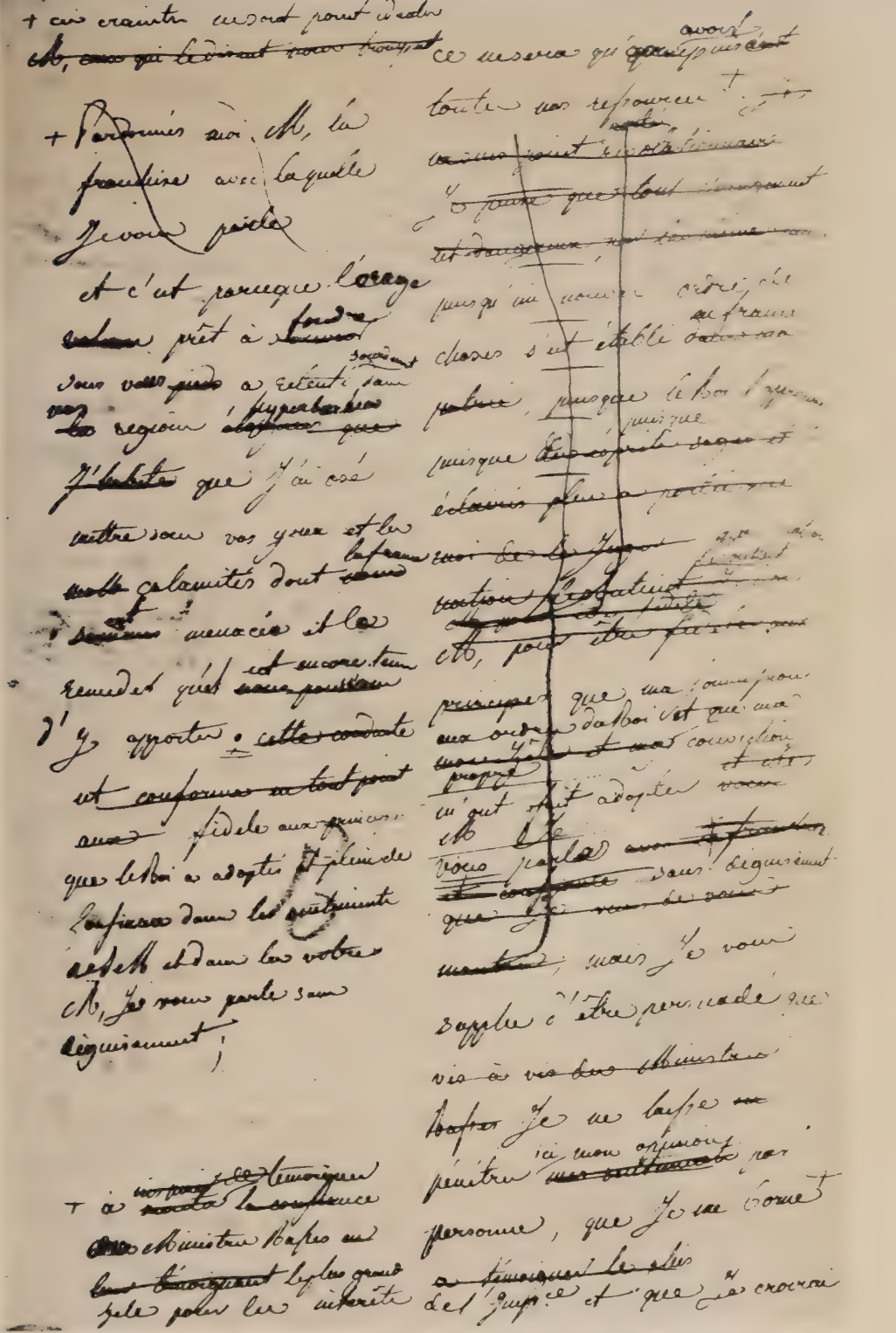
France was still seeking to damage England, and with

that in view was, in this case, prepared to make America as powerful as possible.

3

Aside from that Genet was to do what he could to activate the liquidation of the old American debt to France; he was to make enquiries concerning the practicability of establishing communications between the Western and Southern Oceans by way of Lake Nicaragua; he was to avoid "those ridiculous disputes [over questions of etiquette and precedence] which occupied the old diplomacy to such an extent;" and he was scrupulously to follow the required forms laid down for the correspondence of foreign Ministers with the American Government, and to "permit himself no transactions and no utterances which might give umbrage to the free Americans concerning [their] Constitution which differs in several respects from the principles established in France. . . . The Executive Council relies with absolute confidence on Citizen Genet's known prudence and moderation"—and there they were making a grave mistake, for he was not moderate in temperament or prudent in nature.

He was also to complain of the royalist attitude of Gouverneur Morris, and of his misleading reports on French affairs; "Mr. Morris's behavior is not unknown to you. . . . It is important that the Americans themselves should understand what we think of [that] agent. You will discuss the matter without heat with Mr. Jefferson and with the President himself"—and it should be recalled that throughout the period of President Washington's disputes with Genet the American Minister to France was rendering himself equally obnoxious to the French Government.



GENET TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Sample page of his rough drafts. Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the Genet papers.

And, "in order to make your representations more effective," Genet was to take pains *"to direct opinion by means of anonymous publications."* This was officially recommended to him in his secret instructions. "The Boston and Baltimore gazettes will be the best ones to use for distributing such publications in order to turn aside suspicion of authorship from you; but the more you contrive to influence public opinion indirectly, the more your official discussions with the President and with the Senate must be kept secret so as not to arouse alarm and give them time to cabal against you. Your mission requires of you the greatest astuteness, but in order to be effective it must be secret.

"The cold nature of the Americans only becomes heated by degrees, and indirect methods . . . will be as useful to you as official interviews. As a matter of fact, you can have perfect confidence in the sentiments of the President, of Mr. Jefferson . . . and of Madison, whose influence and affections are equally favorable to us"—another grave mistake in which Genet did not completely participate. "You will need good correspondents at Boston to guide the sentiments of the inhabitants . . . of northern New England; as for the southern States we are pretty well assured of their good disposition."

As for the free navigation of the Mississippi, he was to tell the Americans that France approved their claims and would sustain them as strongly as possible "if Spain were to give them any cause of anxiety on that subject." In case of war with England and Spain the Americans should attack the frontier posts and go with the French to open up

the river, and in Louisiana and Canada they would find many Frenchmen prepared to fight on their side.

And for a new treaty of alliance all that was necessary was "that the two nations should mutually guarantee their sovereignty and possessions. That they should treat each other on a frank basis. That they should promise each other mutually to cooperate in the general emancipation of humanity in the two hemispheres. That they should mutually declare their intention never to wage war against the liberty of any nation."

4

In other words, Genet was to do all the harm he could to England and Spain in America; he was to insist on a strict observance of the existing Franco-American treaties and negotiate new ones; he was most certainly—although it was incumbent upon him to deny it—to do everything in his power to bring America into the war at France's side. And to America, so allied, he was to present territory, power and the opportunity of international influence. The chance to play one of the two leading roles on the stage of contemporary world history. Something which America was then, as perhaps ever, totally incapable, temperamentally, of doing. But the French of 1793, those enthusiastic, theorizing Girondists, could not understand that.

Where Americans had quietly accepted the results of their revolution against England and turned them to private, local benefit, the French imagination, the French national genius, had at once seen in the upheaval of France the salvation of all nations and the duty imposed on France —on any free, self-respecting people—of carrying the gos-

pel of emancipation to the ends of the earth. It was not enough to sit peacefully at home fattening on liberty; one must go forth, in a blaze of consecration, with the drummer boys out in front, and liberate the universe. Every Frenchman abroad worthy of the name, certainly every French diplomatic envoy, was such an apostle, such a crusader of freedom. The risks of war, the material interests of commerce, the denuded state of treasuries—what did France care for those considerations! Was she not penniless, were not half of her people starving, was not all Europe in arms against her—and still the ragged armies of the Republic went forward, still the incredible victories were won, still the incomparable spirit of an entire nation flamed into an unimaginable vigor.

It was a share in these immortalities which Genet—against his better judgment—was to offer to an uncomprehending, unemotionally unreceptive, official America. An America which, for its part, did not at all understand or admit the theory which every Frenchman took for granted—has invariably at all times taken for granted—that the cause of France is the cause of all humanity, that the needs of France take precedence over all other national needs, and that the triumph of France is an indispensable condition of any desirable civilization.

5

Of course it was not entirely as altruistic as all that. The Girondists were extremely interested in commercial affairs, and a large part of Genet's notes had to do with trade conditions in America and with the drawing up of a new treaty of commerce.

They were paying attention, for instance, to a somewhat astonishing production submitted by Hauterive, the Consul at New York. A long document filled with republican flights of language, proposing a new commercial system to supplement his previous scheme for controlling the supplies of all the European countries so that France might become "the arbiter of the happiness of other nations," and that Frenchmen might be looked upon as "the dispensers of all the gifts of nature" and might "with a tender fraternity exercise the sweet function of nourishing Europe"—and so persuade it towards republicanism.

And the new system was based on the fact that France consumed, and that America produced, everything. Then "let us offer to our allies the perspective of a sort of exclusive right to the profits gained [in France] by foreign importation." Indeed, France ought to give "a dazzling preference" to American commerce, and substitute it everywhere for that of Europe. There should be a great congress of merchants from the principal cities of both Republics to study the ideas contributed by every person acquainted with commercial matters. Then a French consular commission to visit America—there was no mention of an American consular commission to visit France—and superintend all transactions, and eventually replace the whole diplomatic organization.

Genet studied these proposals, and added them to his accumulated store of material on America, gathered from every source, from the diplomatic archives, from the files of the various Ministries, from personal interviews with Mr. Otto, formerly consular agent of France in the United

States. A furiously busy time for him, taken up with a multitude of problems—consulates, debts, supplies, colonies —involving a continuous exchange of suggestions and opinions which still encumber his papers of that period with the evidence of an incredible industry, and of his own instigation of many features of his instructions.

And as for the new treaty of commerce, it was to be established, with modifications, upon the basis of Jefferson's ideas; exposed in a confidential interview with Genet's predecessor Ternant, in which Jefferson had stated that if he were consulted concerning such a treaty "he would have it consist of a single article which would respectively naturalize [the citizens] of France and [America] and place them all on a perfectly equal footing with regard to commerce in the various ports of the two nations." This, Genet thought, was on the whole feasible if it was agreed to abolish tariff wars, and "if one recognized that in commercial affairs one must allow what one cannot prevent."

And in any case, the commercial negotiations of France were henceforth to be founded on the most liberal notions; and "Americans and Frenchmen . . . should adopt exclusive measures only against nations cowardly enough to remain in the bondage of despots and aristocrats. Other nations should be considered as brothers by them and treated commercially on a perfectly equal footing."

And this was all perfectly fine, except that in its assumption of the superior attraction of French commercial opportunities it completely ignored certain deep rooted and profitable relations enjoyed by a good many American merchants with England.

6

In the course of his negotiations, they told Genet, he would find in America "several zealous cooperators among the principal executive officers and in the House of Representatives," but he was to make use of them "with all the prudence and circumspection which political propriety requires." Ternant would indicate to him "those persons who would especially deserve his confidence." But Genet did not rely only on Ternant's advice. His files were already filled with notes taken from the correspondence of former Ministers, of Moustier, of Otto, regarding American personalities and states of mind as seen through contemporary French eyes—and interesting primarily, perhaps, by reason of the irony of their frequent misconceptions. Very fatal misconceptions, in some cases, since they were inevitably to influence the attitude of the new French Minister.

In the first place, "the Americans are generally clever, observers, great questioners. Lack of reflection as well as too much reserve displease them equally. The great profits already made from commerce and speculation . . . have turned almost all of them to the making of great fortunes. . . . The gradation of fortune makes itself felt in American cities, and that is the cause of the two parties in the United States, of which one inclines to aristocracy, the other towards democracy." The best way to succeed in dealing with Americans was not to make too many advances or to display too much eagerness to please them, although the reverse was "the doctrine of Mr. Jefferson who usually sees his compatriots as he flatters himself that they are rather than as they really are." Nevertheless "the Americans [do]

require advances and wish [others] to please them. They have often truly been compared to children. They are especially childish in matters of politics, and, moreover, spoiled children, and children of that sort are always very hard to manage, even when you are their master," and still more so when you are not. "The man who knows how to act under these circumstances will be able to exercise his talents for a long time in this country."

Then, for instance, the Morrises. Robert Morris was "a man of the highest talents, whose mercantile speculations are no less limited than his ambition. He directs the Senate . . . by making his politics and his commerce go hand in hand. . . . His influence in the Senate increases daily." Gouverneur Morris was "recognized to have very great talents and an extreme facility for conceiving projects and making them appeal to others. He is perhaps the most eloquent and witty man in his country, but his fellow countrymen themselves distrust his talents. He is admired, but feared"—and Genet would be wise to "never communicate with him." Madison, on the other hand, was "one of the most estimable men by reason of his manners and his talents." Jay, possessed of an active spite against France, had "fortunately . . . been replaced [at the State Department] by the man [Jefferson] we would most have wished to see at [its] head." Jay was "considered a good jurist and fit for the important place [of 'high judge']. His personal qualities, the dryness of his manners, his atrabilious character and his susceptibility to prejudice rendered him little fit for the place which he occupied rather than filled formerly . . . It will always be worth while to maintain good external relations with Mr. Jay . . . on account of the very

great influence which his post gives him in deciding many questions . . . passed on by the Federal tribunals . . . and where he will try to set himself up as an oracle."

Now John Adams was "nowhere near the important personage that Mr. Adams would like to persuade himself that he is; all the attempts he has made to do so have only served to render him ridiculous . . . People have gone so far in the Senate as to express before him the idea of the absolute uselessness of a position such as his. Consequently since his position brings him only slight consideration, while his pedantic nature renders him odious or ridiculous, one must hope that his influence will not be very great. The lack of success which he had in England has modified his exaltation in favor of that former mother country. As for the spite which always exists at the bottom of his heart against France for not having known how to appreciate his merit and his great talents . . . I [Moustier] hope that it will produce no sinister result."

In fact, "as for Mr. Adams," according to Otto in 1791, "there is no question of him any longer. He has lost all his standing, and it is doubtful if he will ever be reelected Vice President. He is too monarchical and too much attached to the English Constitution." A "most dangerous writer of diatribes against the French Revolution." Although from another source Genet learned that if Adams was an aristocrat "it is from pure principles, and aristocrats like that are not dangerous."

And of course George Washington. "His name is everything. He possesses . . . all the virtues of a republican." He was very careful not to be indiscreet, or give offense to the enemies of France in America, but he was sin-

cerely friendly to France. Moustier was "generally well received by the President, but the importance which he attaches to his dignity, and his natural reserve, make intercourse with him excessively chilly." Those terrible levees with the sword, and the plumes, and the yellow gloves! And Otto found that "the President lives with *éclat* and completely fulfills in this respect the expectation of the public. By his prudence and moderation he continues to merit all the marks of affection which are given him. His sentiments towards France are well known, but I have always attributed his reserve on this point to the impression which must have been made on him by the rumor spread during the war by the English to the effect that he was secretly in the pay of France." At all events, it did not occur to any Frenchman to suppose that President Washington was not completely devoted to the cause of France. That was taken for granted.

But "it is Mr. Jefferson especially who takes the liveliest interest in the success of [the French] revolution. He has often told me [Otto] that the labors of the National Assembly will serve to regenerate not only France but the United States whose principles were already beginning to be corrupted." He "has already given public proof of his modesty and his attachment to France . . . while he never ceases to expose . . . the prejudices, the pride and the vainglory of England as well as her hatred of Americans"—just the conduct one would wish from a Secretary of State —"He made his début here with the simplicity of a real republican; his modesty and kindness have won all hearts for him. Of all the Americans who have been in France he is, after Doctor Franklin, the only one who expresses the slight-

est gratitude for the good reception accorded to him. Mr. Jefferson is like all Southerners republican in mind and heart, but more capable of gratitude than most people in a free country. The most influential men think that if the United States lost the President [Washington], he [Jefferson] would be more likely than any other to succeed him."

An event which Frenchmen eagerly looked forward to, and did their best to promote in the presidential election of 1796. And in April of 1793, when there was a rumor that Jefferson was resigning from the State Department, the French Foreign Ministry was very worried, and writing to Genet that "we have to fear that he may be replaced by a man less attached than he to our alliance and less opposed to England." And "although you should in no case take part openly in the domestic affairs of the American Government, it will be prudent of you to prevent by judicious means the placing of the functions of Secretary of State in the hands of a man won over to England . . . You will in this matter act with the greatest circumspection in order to compromise neither . . . your popularity nor the confidence which you have been able to inspire"—a communication which very clearly illuminates the whole character of the instructions which Genet was in duty bound to obey.

And then Alexander Hamilton—but there was a curious omission. There are no little notes on Alexander Hamilton in the Genet papers. A very regrettable omission if it signified that the French Government had not discovered that Hamilton was the power behind the American throne; Hamilton, for the time being, and not Jefferson who mattered in American affairs; Hamilton who detested Jefferson, so that any partisan of the latter must incur the hostility

of the former. Things which it would have been extremely useful for Genet to know.

7

There was so much to do.

Money. His salary was to be sixty thousand *livres* a year, out of which he must pay his house rent, the upkeep of his offices, the board and lodging of his secretaries, the customary bonuses, his personal charities, all "ordinary" expenses, and the "cost of illumination on holidays and occasions of public rejoicing." A credit of thirty thousand *livres* would be opened for him at Philadelphia for "extraordinary" expenses, postage, travelling, and gratuities "made necessary by circumstances." If he took a furlough he would be expected to defray the ordinary expenses of his legation and to assign one tenth of his salary to the secretary acting as Chargé d'Affaires during his absence. The salary to be drawn of course from the United States Treasury and deducted from the American debt to France.

So much to do. Two carriages and trunks, eight other little trunks, clothes, uniforms, table linen for twenty-four covers, napkins, eight dozen napkins, shirts, thirty-six shirts—so many of his things had been lost in the Baltic coming in a ship from Russia—crockery and wine. A letter somewhere from his sister Henriette about that; a white and gold china set, very cheap, and the "pick of Mr. Campan's cellar," all carefully packed up so that not a bottle would be lost. Choice wines at cost, if he wanted them. The new address—Citizen Genet, Minister Plenipotentiary and all the rest of it, Bureau of American Correspondence, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Three servants, Osmont,

Mieuset and Casimir the Russian. Three secretaries, Pascal, Moissonnier from St. Petersburg, Bournonville of boyhood days. A botanist to be appointed—all those American plants and trees. Money, money, money. Keep the baggage down because the Captain of the frigate at Rochefort had written to say that he was all loaded up with supplies for six months. What would he have done if he had had to take the King and Queen, and all those people!

The family at Beauplan. "I leave in Citizen Bonnet's hands my dearest interests and my most precious possessions. I confide to his care the affairs of my mother, of my sisters and my own, and . . . my library as well as the furniture which I may possess at Versailles as well as at Montreuil." Bonnet would provide for Madame Genet "by means of funds which I will always take pains to supply," and he would see to it that "she should not contract any debts." A difficult task, apparently, and Bonnet was to have a great deal of trouble with "Madame your mother," who was " very unreasonable" and would "lend herself to nothing." There were pensions to be collected, and some private arrangements with Uncle Toto concerning his inheritance, and Bonnet was to secure precedence for Genet's claims "which are stronger than my sisters', my uncle having incurred debts to me." And Bonnet was to have trouble with him, too, and find him "a perfect egoist."

Genet's resources were not very considerable, and he hoped that his mother's expenses would not amount to more than three thousand *livres*—including the keep of a dog, a donkey and a cow. He wanted her to retire to the country with Madame Campan, and if this were done he thought that four thousand *livres* would be enough for both

of them, "aside from the surplus which the garden may bring them. In any case, I rely . . . on their friendship and on the desire which they must have to see me assured of [financial] independence before my old age." It was his wish to acquire a public domain, payable in installments, or a mortgaged property on which to reunite his family. Money would have to be borrowed, and Bonnet must look around for "something suitable." And it was to be in reality for Henriette Campan, "for whose consolation I particularly intend this retreat." But Bonnet was not to find it easy. The Genet ladies were hard to please, and were inclined to give themselves airs. Money was scarce, Bonnet was obliged to report in June of 1793, because "no one wants to know your family, or deal with it; I myself no longer dare speak of it." The family was too closely associated in the public mind with Versailles and the aristocrats, and "I invite you [Genet], in friendship's name, to be very careful in your relations, and especially not to write to Beauplan." Aside from that Bonnet hoped that Genet would marry a rich American girl.

But Henriette was very grateful; her "only happiness" was to see her brother, to talk with him, "to find in your good sense, in your mind, consolation for my griefs." She would go again to Paris "to pay you a little visit" before he left—he had already said goodbye at Beauplan—although she did not wish to bother him. "Adieu my good child," she wrote to him. "Think of your good sister. For fifteen years she has not ceased to think of others, today she is old, poor. . . . You will be her consolation, her support. I don't want to become sentimental. Once again, Adieu . . ." And again, "Adieu my dear friend, love and think

of your good sister, her downfall is fearful and undeserved. . . . If fortune had favored her she would have done what you will do. Her arms would have been open to the brother whom she adores. You are my only support, my hope. Without you, without your existence, I would no longer care to live. . . . Adieu my guardian angel."

He put on his tricolor sash and drove out through the barrier, after they had searched his trunks, on the road to Rochefort. In the name of the Republic, One and Indivisible.

8

He was at Rochefort on January 30, 1793, and "the speed with which I came here, Citizen, has not accelerated my departure; the winds are in the South and we would make useless efforts if we struggled against them. . . . In any case, the delays which I experience are not without utility for education. I am gathering from the persons in charge of the management of the port very interesting ideas concerning the various administrative matters entrusted to me by the Ministry of the Navy."

He always found business to do, and now he was busier than ever. Letters to the Ministries—harbors, provisions, finances, consuls—schemes to protect from exposure the timber imported from America for masts, suggestions for the construction of arsenals, plans for sending to the American station a strong French fleet which would "protect our commerce and at the same time encourage the Americans to declare themselves and adopt our views." His things were all aboard the frigate—the *Embuscade,* Captain Bompard, "a beautiful frigate well armed"—and

he had persuaded the Captain to unload two months' supplies in order to lighten the vessel and give more play to the broadsides in case they met the enemy. And he was himself "fully determined to concentrate all my efforts so as to overcome the obstacles which might hinder the execution of my instructions . . . the Americans are free men. It is not possible for them to be ungrateful, they will help us."

But he could not overcome the contrary winds, and on February 9, "far from moderating, the winds blow every day against us with renewed fury. Yesterday a terrible gale greatly imperilled all the vessels in the harbor. The *Embuscade* dragged her anchors, her . . . small boats were sunk, her rigging was damaged and a man of the crew was killed." But the damage was being repaired, and "while waiting for the sky to become more favorable, I continue to employ my leisure in instructing myself concerning . . . the administration of the navy." For one thing, the English gazettes should be watched again for British naval news, and French sailors should be taught English nautical terms. For the expected war had been declared, and all the crews of embargoed British ships were asking for work. "Only one royalist captain has been found. He is reviled by the others. This man who at least can swear like a good Englishman never stops repeating *God damn those desperate devils.* Ça ira, Citizen Minister, and with that I salute you fraternally."

Although it had not gone so well for a while in the French fleet. The sailors were slow to respond to the call, and complained that they were underpaid, so that Genet had contributed three hundred *livres* toward a subscription to provide bonuses and equipment for those who reported

on time, under the auspices of the Society of Liberty and Equality, and the movement was being imitated in other ports. And there had even been "a little mutiny" aboard the *Embuscade*—an echo, apparently, of the Dauphin episode at the gates of Paris—but Genet had written a letter to be read to the crew, and "unanimous cries of Long live the Nation, Long live the Republic, silenced the clamor of those fire eaters who will be disarmed."

And as for the English war, "I am consumed with desire to reach my destination. . . . We will go out of here matches burning, for it is very likely that the English have cruisers now outside our harbors. . . . We will not look for them, but if they accost us your entire embassy will know how to show them that it is possible to . . . handle both pen and guns—on which we ought henceforth to engrave The People's Last Word. This motto would certainly be better than the one which the kings used to put on these instruments of their vengeance."

And on February 17, "we have decided to leave tomorrow with the early morning tide. . . . If by chance the winds are still shifting we will make use of both broadsides [we will tack] in order to make our way in spite of Aeolus; and we will resort to the same method, from another point of view, if we meet Mr. Guelph's vessels." And so they went out, at last, with gaiety; drums beating to quarters, the guns out and ready, Liberty Caps at the mastheads and the dawn shining on the gilded emblems of the Axe and Faggots on the quarter galleries. Matches burning.

He must have looked back for a while, watched the receding coast, wondered when he would return. But he was never to return; he was never again to behold the green

shores of France, or the long white roads, or any member of his family. He was going to America, and America would take him, and destroy him, and then cherish him until the end.

CHAPTER VII

RABBLES AND RUM

1

IN America, President Washington was riding around Philadelphia in a beautiful coach ornamented with enamelled cupids; "Lady" Washington was holding very rigidly magnificent receptions, and complaining of the antics of the "filthy democrats," as she called them; in the President's parlor there were medallions on the wall of Louis XVI and his family; Alexander Hamilton was on the best of terms with the British Minister, Hammond; Don Carlos de Yrujo, the Spanish Minister, all dazzling in gold lace and diamonds, would soon be dancing passepieds and sarabands at the Assemblies at Oeller's Tavern. The French Revolution had not in the least diminished the importance of these gentlemen; one did not, in those circles, remind oneself that they were the representatives of tyrannical despots. Not at all.

Elsewhere, the young ladies of the elegant Third Street part of town—who, in the opinion of Moreau de Saint Méry, were "adorable at fifteen, faded at twenty-three, old at thirty-five and decrepit at forty," and afflicted with bad teeth, falling hair and a passion for ribbons—were appearing at Birthday Balls and levees, and in the brilliantly

chandeliered drawing rooms of Mrs. Blodget, of Mrs. Bingham, of the Chews, and Clymers, and McKeans, attired in brocaded silk trimmed with silver, with sometimes two watches dangling from their tasselled sashes, and ostrich feathers in their hair; the young men of fashion were gambling at loo, and drinking entirely too much claret and madeira, going to Ricketts's circus to see the fearless Mrs. Ricketts ride two horses at once, promenading the north side of Market Street in boots and colored stockings, attending social functions in "genteel mobs," and eating ice cream with gold spoons at Amelia Bingham's.

Outside—in the brick city of scoured stoops, "infested with bedbugs and flies," which prohibited the exhibition of a statue called the Venus de Medici and encouraged its daughters to read *Roderick Random* and *Peregrine Pickle* —the good citizens "who washed their faces and hands with care, but never their mouths, seldom their feet, and even more rarely their bodies," were smoking, and sipping very hot tea, and devouring quantities of green fruit while the oyster barrows were being trundled through the streets until ten o'clock at night "with lamentable cries." There was a constant clattering of carriages to routs, and suppers, and cards; a "dissipation" never before equalled; a "frenzy" upon the inhabitants who set "no limit to their prodigality;" an extravagance everywhere, and "a profusion and luxury . . . on great days, at the tables of the wealthy, in their equipages and the dresses of their wives and daughters" which surpassed anything to be seen in the country; a brilliance to the President's entertainments "beyond anything you can imagine;" a splendor to private hospitality which startled even the refugeed French nobles.

An intemperate hospitality, free with its wines and punches, six bottles of madeira to a man often; free, also, with its indecent small talk and salacious humor. An arrogant, purse proud hospitality, frequently, from which "democratic gentlemen and their families," no matter how well placed socially, were "ostracized" by the best people; conspicuous in its highest circles for its "pride, haughtiness and ostentation." An English influence prevailing "with great intolerance;" a "vanity of wealth" everywhere; a desire, it was suspected, "that an order of nobility should be established," by means of which the leaders of this frankly aristocratic American society "might be exalted above their fellow citizens as much as they are in their own conceit." A hospitality, a social mentality, dispensed and shared by the Morrises, by Alexander Hamilton, by the Binghams, by many close friends of the President.

2

So Mr. Bowers, in his *Jefferson and Hamilton,* has vividly and disparagingly revealed it, quoting from contemporary records; and with due allowance for the deliberately "democratic" hostility of Mr. Bowers's pen—one wonders, for instance, why he finds it necessary to call the King of France "poor imbecile Louis"—so Genet was to find it. The ruling, governmental, Federalist class in America; completely aristocratic in its manners; entirely worldly according to the times in its habits; instinctively English in all its tendencies, since the political fact of the revolution had not for a moment robbed it of its British blood, of its British heritage, of its British traditions. Such a group it was that Genet was approaching with his proposals of

diplomatic and commercial marriage with France—and not even the France of 1778, the France of Rochambeau, and Lauzun, and "Beau" Fersen, but the France of the red bonnets, of Marat, of Chaumette, of Robespierre. The France that had murdered Louis XVI, concerning whom the Federalist gazettes were soon to be saying that—

> "Thee, King of Sorrows, shall my verse bewail,
> Though France an impious hand may raise
> Thou shalt not want the stranger's praise,
> Who marks with pity's pen thy melancholy tale . . .
> [Imagination] sees around the crimson'd scaffold stand
> Democracy with furious eye,
> Delirious Rage, pale Jealousy,
> While joyous Murder crowns her regicidal hand."

Alexander Hamilton and Robespierre—the Girondists were not long to remain in power after Genet's arrival in America—Alexander Hamilton and Robespierre. The man of banks and bonds, of property, of law and order, of monarchical preference, and the man of anarchy, of public violence, of bloody demagoguery. Genet should have understood how fantastic such a union must be, but Genet had not learned in time that it was Hamilton who must be listened to in America, because it was Hamilton's words that issued forth on the President's voice. He was to listen, instead, to a great roaring in the streets, and to bemuse himself with the superficial rhapsodies of Thomas Jefferson.

And in time he was to write sadly home to his Government that "America is so little understood in France, we have been so deceived concerning the attitude of those who govern her." A misunderstanding and a self-deception

which the passing generations have perhaps not yet entirely dispelled.

3

And in the streets there was a terrific roaring, the roaring of Lady Washington's "filthy democrats"—the "men of no importance" whose eagerly acquiescent idol was Thomas Jefferson—the rank and file of the American populace, and some quite intelligent, important people like the McKeans in their midst; who had, themselves, gone solemnly insane over the French Revolution, and who were now expressing their hysterical delight in that event in a series of ridiculous "republican" festivals.

Men who talked about the Hydra of Despotism, the Phœnix of Freedom and the Gallo-Columbian Fraternity of Freemen, and drank toasts proposing that the sister republics of France and America be as incorporate as light and heat. Men who read with pleasure in their own gazettes that "Louis Capet has lost his *caput*. From my use of a pun it may seem that I think lightly of his fate. I certainly do. It affects me no more than the execution of another malefactor." Men who took their wives and children to the waxworks of the King's execution to see "the knife fall, the head drop and the lips turn blue." Men who sang the *Marseillaise* and the *Ça Ira* in the theatres, and applauded performances of *The Demolition of the Bastille*. Men who plunged carving knives into emblematic pigs at bibulous banquets distinguished by the convivial ferocity of their democratic enthusiasm for the Rays of Liberty. Men who cut their hair *à la Brutus*, put up Liberty Caps on poles, wore tricolor cockades in their hats, and called each other Citizen and their ladies Citess.

For where in France it was a grave matter, a grim madness that led to the scaffold, in America it was principally a question of mummery, a voluble frenzy that led only to the banqueting hall, and thence safely to bed. Although there were to be those in 1793 who advocated a guillotine "permanent in the State House yard [at] Philadelphia." Indeed, "we might have seen the banks of the Delaware . . . covered with human carcasses and its waters tinged with blood . . . and even the head of our admired and beloved President rolling on the scaffold." For the President was an aristocrat, and the Vice President too. All the democrats knew that, and Jefferson was forever rattling the skeleton of monarchy in the American closet. There was a conspiracy, and those "crocodiles" were aspiring to make themselves kings.

If any proof were lacking, Freneau's *National Gazette* —Jefferson's organ—could supply it in "the monarchical farce of the [President's] Birthday." But "truth, like the morning sun breaking through the vapours exhaled by the night, will chase away every [monarchical] cloud." The American people had hitherto "passed over the absurdities of levees and every species of royal pomp and parade . . . but their own interest has at length conquered the delicacy of their attachment [to Washington] and they begin"—this was in 1793—"to express their abhorrence of the gewgaws of a court." So they talked and wrote in the republican press controlled by Jefferson. There was to be, during the French Terror, "not a single action of the French revolutionists but has been justified and applauded in our public papers, and many of them in our public assemblies. Anarchy has its open advocates"—and three cheers for Jefferson.

Although he was not always to be so devoted to French revolutionary principles, this man who so appropriately invented the "whirligig" chair. For in 1804, John Quincy Adams, that pitiless recorder of words, was to write in his diary that he had dined with Jefferson, and that the latter had remarked "how contrary to expectation this great *bouleversement* had turned out. It seemed as if everything in France . . . had been a DREAM, and who could have imagined that such an *ébranlement* would have come to this"—Napoleon, Emperor. "He thought it very much to be wished that they could now return to the Constitution of 1789, and call back the Old [royal] Family . . . I have used as near as possible his very words; for this is one of the most unexpected phazes in the waxing and waning opinions of this gentleman concerning the French revolution."

A great deal of talk and some broken heads; what John Adams was later to call "sound and fury." A great deal of gunpowder, a great deal of food, and an enormous amount of liquor. "I believe from my soul there have been more cannons fired here in the celebration of [French victories] than the French fired in achieving [them.] I think I have counted twenty-two grand civic festivals, fifty-one of an inferior order, and one hundred and ninety-three public dinners." Some very astonishing festivals. Mobs in New York and Philadelphia, a great ringing of chimes, and swilling of toasts, and bellowing of songs.

"By hell inspired with brutal rage,
Austria and Prussia both engage
To crush fair freedom's flame;
But the intrepid sons of France
Have led them such a glorious dance
They've turned their backs for shame."

A "grand civic pageant" in Charleston; the Governor, the Chief Justice, the Speaker of the House, the French Consul, all in procession to St. Philip's for a *Te Deum* capped by the *Marseillaise,* while the bells of St. Michael's rang out their jubilee. And then a "grand fete" at Williams's Coffee House. A magnificent procession in Boston; twelve individuals in white frocks armed with cleavers, escorting the Ox of Aristocracy; wagons full of bread and punch to be distributed to the crowds; a tremendous concourse of marching citizens, viewed from the balconies by "bevies of our amiable and beautiful women, who by their smiles and approbation cast a pleasing lustre over the festive scenes." In the evening, an entertainment at Faneuil Hall given by the French Consul, in a chamber ornamented with broken scepters and crowns. More guns, more bells, more liquor.

Although they were not so pleased when news of the King's execution reached them. "The melancholy fate of the first Princely hand which was stretched forth to relieve America in the hour of her distress being now ascertained, we hear that the committee who superintended the Ox Procession have requested that the head and horns of that victim which are now placed on the flag staff at Liberty Square should be put in mourning . . . and that . . . the flag itself be cut down, dropped in the dock, and with the head and horns be there buried—as an evidence of the truth . . . that the free Americans consider themselves indebted to Louis for their liberty, and that the news of his execution has given them great pain." On the other hand, after the Queen's execution, a tavern keeper at Philadelphia who had been showing her head on his sign was to find himself obliged

to add a red streak around the neck by the earnest republican inhabitants of that town.

It was all, in the main, excessively idiotic, unspeakably childish, a smug parody of the drama overseas. The good American burghers playing at terrorism. Under it all there was the very real local class discontent of the American masses that were soon enough—but not soon enough for Genet—to sweep Jefferson, their docile leader, into power; a survival, also, of the popular hatred of England. For England condemned the French Revolution, and whatever England did must be wrong, "hence it is that all the execrable acts of the French legislators . . . have met with the most unqualified applauses, merely because they were execrated in . . . [Britain]." And behind it all, the personal duel across the Cabinet table between Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton, masquerading in the streets as a public conflict between France and England, between democracy and aristocracy.

"What hugging and tugging," Alexander Graydon was later to remember. "What addressing and caressing! What mountebanking and chanting with liberty caps and the other wretched trumpery of *sans culotte* foolery!" Sound and fury, rabbles and rum—one must go to Mr. Bowers for the tramp and chant of it—and Genet looked on and listened, and thought that what he heard was America calling to France.

4

There they sat behind the scenes. At the Treasury, Hamilton the sly one, the Federalist tax gatherer, that "singular character" who, Jefferson thought, was "not only a monarchist, but for a monarchy bottomed on corruption,"

who was "so bewitched and perverted by the British example as to be under thorough conviction that corruption was essential to the government of a nation." And at the Department of State, Thomas Jefferson, not so long returned from a five years' sojourn in Paris, with a mind steeped in the fumes of democracy, so that he reeled intellectually in a haze of rabid republicanism illuminated by the beacon, the "pole star" of his self-confessed obsession for France.

An individual whose views on foreign policies, along with those of Madison, were, in Hamilton's judgment, "unsound and dangerous;" who had "a womanish attachment to France and a womanish resentment against Great Britain;" who would "draw us into the closest embrace of the former and involve us in all the consequences of her politics;" who, in France, had seen government "only on the side of its abuses," and drank "deeply of the French philosophy in religion, in science, in politics;" who had come from France "in the moment of fermentation which he had a share in exciting, and in the passions and feelings of which he shared both from temperament and situation;" who had come, also, "probably with a too partial idea of his own powers, and with the expectation of a greater share in the direction of our councils than he has in reality enjoyed;" who had come "electrified plus with attachment to France and with the project of knitting together the two countries in the closest political bands."

An individual of flexible principles, of whom it seemed to Oliver Wolcott that "few men ever practised the arts of political chicanery with greater address and perseverance," and who in his office was "distinguished for an attention to all those trifles which attend the minds of half learned,

dreaming politicians and superficial scholars." An individual who imagined monarchist plots behind every door; who catered to the populace with servility and an abject zealotry; who might very readily, given the opportunity, have taken an unbalanced fanatic's place in the high councils of the French Revolution; who concurred hypocritically in the deliberations of his colleagues and then attacked them virulently, and anonymously, and with the pens of hirelings, in his *National Gazette*. An individual of duplicities, of contradictions and of treacheries. An individual, Wolcott was afterwards to record, who "stimulated the prejudices of the French Minister, Genet, against his colleagues in the American Cabinet, and after he had been seduced into intemperate measures this too sanguine instrument of his intriguing ambition was sacrificed without scruple." And Genet was one day himself to tell him what he thought of it all.

Jefferson for France against England, Hamilton for England against France, democracy against aristocracy,—America was sometimes quite forgotten—each of them, primarily, for himself against the other, playing the strings of the popular fiddle for whatever tune might be scraped out of it, while the President drove majestically from Philadelphia to Mount Vernon and from Mount Vernon back to Philadelphia—there were the personages whom Genet was coming to meet; the bland, smiling one at the State Department who was to betray him, and the sharp, hostile one at the Treasury who was to ruin him.

5

They knew he was coming. The execution of Louis XVI, war between France and England, and a new republican French Minister. Gouverneur Morris's "upstart."

And at Philadelphia, very soon, waiting to visit the President, Mr. de Noailles who might be considering himself an envoy from the royalist side, and whom Genet always so considered.

It suddenly dawned on everybody—on Hamilton first of all, perhaps—that here was an extremely ticklish situation. A change of government in France which might or might not be permanent, and an emissary to represent it. Perhaps another one from the royalists. "Should we in such case receive both?" Hamilton had been writing to Jay; and if only one, would that be "perfectly neutral?" France at war with the British, and some awkward Franco-American treaties in existence. A treaty of *alliance* with France, to conflict, possibly, with a later treaty of peace with England. Should the new French Minister be received? Should the French treaties be respected? They had been made with a monarch now fallen and deceased. The French Republic had itself examined to see which of the old royal treaties it would honor. "What the government of France shall be is the very point in dispute," Hamilton thought. " 'Til that is decided, the applicability of the [French] treaties is suspended." How did one "suspend" a treaty? Neutrality, war, the national signature on some pieces of paper. The President came hurrying back from Mount Vernon, and the Cabinet met.

And as for Genet, they finally decided that he must be received; the only point was the question of possible reservations. Jefferson and Randolph, the Attorney General, were for recognition without conditions. Hamilton, with Knox at his side, maintained that Genet should be informed of an intention to suspend a decision on the validity of the treaties.

Not to do that might "occasion misconstruction." And that was true, and if there was any such intention, Hamilton was perfectly right, and a plain statement of the American Government's policy at an early date would have avoided endless discussion and difficulty. At least, Genet would have known where he stood. He might even have gone home.

But the Cabinet could agree on no definite policy as to the treaties, and Jefferson would not hear of conditional recognition, and it was one of Jefferson's days in the Cabinet. He must have peace—he was America's most valiant pacifist—but he must also preserve the semblance of friendship for France. He must, from the very first, ride two horses at once, blow both hot and cold in the same breath and whirl about in his chair so as to face simultaneously in as many directions as possible. The great Yes and No man.

As for the treaties themselves, they were a terrible nuisance, that was all. Two of them. The treaty of amity and commerce which granted certain joint maritime and trading privileges, which allowed each nation to take the prizes of its privateers into the other's ports while mutually closing the ports to the captures made by enemies of either country, which forbade also the arming of privateers hostile to one nation in the ports of the other and similarly the enlistment by the enemy of citizens of either country against the other. With France at war with England, a certain cause of that "embroilment" with both Powers which the President was so anxious to avoid—all this business of privateers and prizes—without reference to Genet's subsequent claim that if French prizes could be taken into American ports they could obviously also be condemned there by his newly formed Consular Admiralty Courts, and that if Brit-

ish privateers could not be fitted out in American ports then the converse, that French privateers could be so fitted out, was certainly intended to be the fact. And the same converse with regard to enlistments of citizens.

And the treaty of alliance, the important surviving clause of which stated that "the two parties guarantee mutually . . . and *forever* against all other Powers to wit: the United States to His Most Christian Majesty, the present possessions of the Crown of France in America . . ." And that meant that America might be called upon to defend the French West Indies against British seizure.

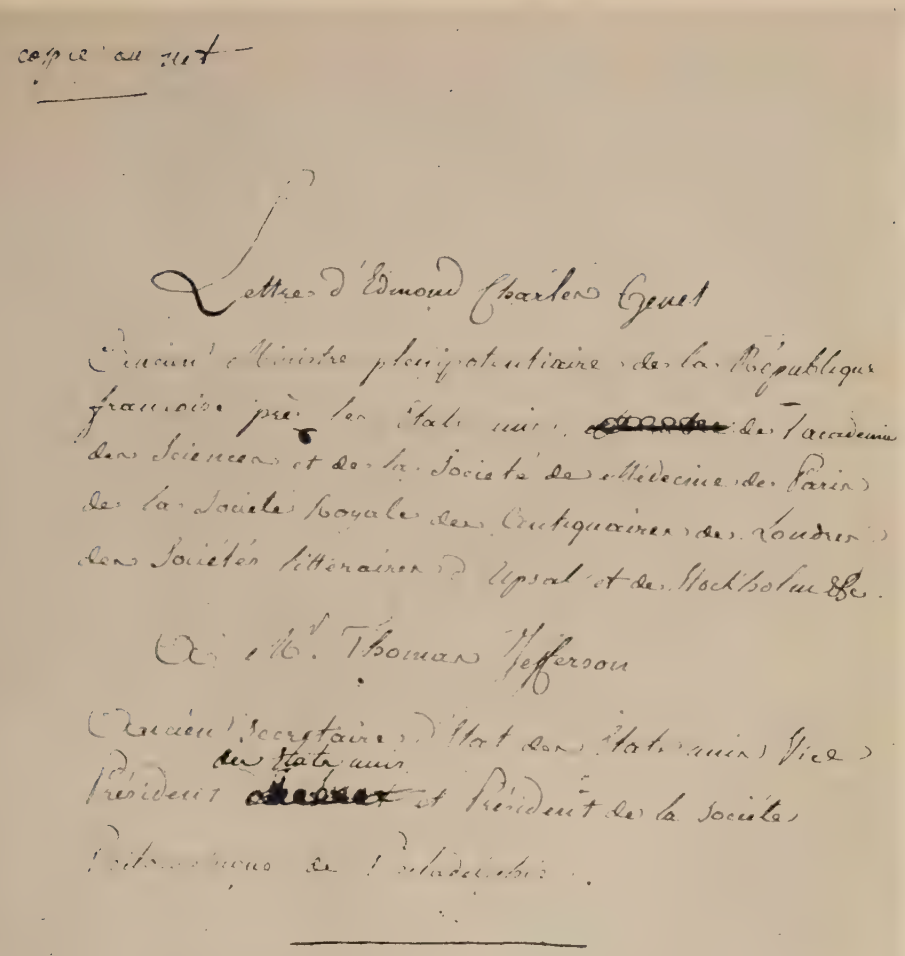
It was a desperate dilemma, and if they had known what else Genet was bringing in his pockets his mission would have terminated on the beach. Repudiate the treaties or find yourself at war with England, and Hamilton's Federalists eager for the former—his merchants anxious to be let alone at their commerce—Jefferson's populace roaring for the latter. An "almost universal" sentiment, John Marshall found it, shared by "a great majority" of Americans who esteemed it "criminal to remain unconcerned spectators of a conflict between their ancient enemy and Republican France." And quiet people everywhere who realized that it would be folly for America to go to war with anyone. But always that wretched national signature on some pieces of paper. Honor.

The President had presented thirteen questions, formulated by Hamilton, and tending, Jefferson felt, "to a declaration of the Executive that our treaty with France is void," and that was not "sound morality." He himself was sure that it was actually a matter for Congress, the war making body, but he argued for neutrality without repudiation. He

would have his cake and eat it, the sanctity of treaties without the inconvenience of abiding by them. That was perfectly "sound morality." Hamilton was for complete neutrality without interference by Congress, and the treaties in the waste basket. Never mind morality, common sense. Randolph said no, the treaties were valid. The President had "never had a doubt of the validity of the French treaty." Knox rumbled Hamiltonian opinions. It was a pity that they could not make up their minds, one way or the other; because they involved the law of the land, these treaties, and, if valid, all that Genet—or any citizen of the United States—had to do was to be guided by them in order to justify operations under their clauses, no matter how many proclamations of neutrality might be issued.

6

They argued and quibbled, all of them looking for peace, and Jefferson and Hamilton fighting the battle of France and England in America. Every sort of subterfuge. The treaties inapplicable because France was waging offensive war with England—as though she had not simply taken the first step in an inevitable conflict. A great thumbing of authorities on international law—Vattel, Puffendorf and the rest—to see if some convenient interpretation could not be squeezed out of them. "Would you suppose it possible," Jefferson was to tell Madison, "that it should have been seriously proposed to declare our treaties with France void on the authority of an ill understood scrap in Vattel?" Although he was not to hesitate to fall back on such pedantries in his own eventual dealings with Genet. To which Madison replied that "the attempt to shuffle off the treaty altogether



GENET TO JEFFERSON

First page of the duplicate letter of 1797. Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the Genet papers.

by quibbling on Vattel is . . . contemptible for the meanness and folly of it. If a change of government is an absolution from public engagements, why not from . . . domestic [ones]; and what then becomes of public debts . . . What most surprises me is that such a proposition *should have been discussed.*" But Jefferson's henchman saw no meanness nor any folly in the recognition of a treaty only for the purpose of ignoring it.

The theory, too, that the treaties had, in any case, long since ceased to be operative. Genet was not unaware of that attitude. "The Americans," he had noted, "are in doubt as to whether the [French] alliance remains in force . . . and whether the treaty of 1778 was not looked upon merely as a means to insure the independence of the United States." And in 1787 the French Ministry had been writing to Otto that France had "never pretended to make America a useful ally," and had had "no further end in view than to deprive Great Britain of that vast continent." Genet knew that, but he also knew that in 1788—in reply to a reported statement of Jay's that the alliance no longer existed—Montmorin had advised Moustier that the King and his Council "have been extremely astonished by Mr. Jay's opinion. . . . That Minister must have then forgotten the terms in which that alliance was conceived: let him be so good as to read over the treaty . . . and convince himself that it is perpetual." For the King "looks upon his alliance with the United States as unalterable."

Anything to crawl out of this irksome obligation. And in the background—except in the case of Jefferson—a state of mind which undoubtedly prevailed, and which might as well make itself understood at this point, although it was not

to be expressed until four years later. The official, informed, governmental American state of mind concerning the whole subject of American "gratitude" to France for her assistance in the revolution. Genet, Fauchet, Adet—one French Minister after another, and in later days again—it was to be their continual cry, one of their hottest arguments in controversy with the United States, that America owed a tremendous debt of gratitude to France, owed her independence to the King's altruism, owed her existence to the generosity and idealism of France—a debt concretely represented by several millions of *livres* still on the books. A debt which required of America the utmost devotion to French interests. A debt to harp on, and ring the sentimental changes on, and sound the loud love and friendship timbrels on.

And Jefferson's men in the street believed it—America had not forgotten Yorktown—and Frenchmen everywhere were only too eager to believe it now that their own ox was being gored; and Genet and his successors were obliged to believe it, although if they were able to read their own archives they must have understood the mockery of it, a mockery which their own Government admitted when it referred to the underhanded diplomacy of their royal predecessors. But at Philadelphia, at New York, there were men who did not believe it, Washington, Adams, Jay—especially Jay—men who remembered 1782 and knew better.

And in 1797, in reply to the protests of Adet—the "Diplomatic Blunderbuss" who had worked so hard for the election of Jefferson in 1796—the American Minister to France was being asked by Secretary of State Pickering whether the Ministers of the French Republic would "never cease to reproach us with 'ingratitude'? If, indeed, 'France wrought'

as well as 'guaranteed the independence of the United States,' as Mr. Adet asserts, 'at a time when she might, as the price of that independence, have granted them less liberal conditions,' our obligations are greater than we have hitherto imagined. But it is time that these claims to our gratitude were investigated, and their extent ascertained."

The French archives, Pickering pointed out, were full of utterances admitting the independence of the United States prior to French intervention, full of confessions of the avowed and sole French policy of aiding the Americans for the purpose of damaging England and enhancing the interests of France. And "do such motives afford any strong claims to our gratitude. . . . During near three years of our contest [France] continued waiting for some fortunate event that should ensure stability and ultimate success to our enterprise. This event took place in the capture of [Burgoyne's] army. 'Then the King listened to the proposition of Congress . . . ' "—Pickering was quoting from French memorials—"He then treated with the Americans *'with no other view* than to put an end to the . . . power [of] England. . . .' After these repeated declarations [of motive] on the part of France . . . very unexpected, indeed, are the modern claims of boundless and perpetual gratitude."

Nevertheless America remembered Yorktown, America had not forgotten that the Commissioners had been only too deeply thankful to obtain their alliance, "we should have remained silent on these claims had not the frequency and manner in which they have been urged compelled their discussion. . . . We were in the habit of expressing our gratitude to [France] for the benefits which we received; although they resulted from her exertions to advance *her own*

interest and secure *her own safety.* But if those benefits had been rendered from pure benevolence, from disinterested good will to us, and we had been remiss in acknowledging them, is it the part of generosity, of magnanimity, constantly to upbraid the receivers of their favors with ingratitude? Do not such reproaches cancel the obligation? But if for favors, apparently generous, substantial returns are demanded, the supposed liberal act degenerates and becomes a mercenary bargain. . . ."

Very plain, blunt, American words, and some others concerning the peace negotiations of 1782, and "why are we so often reminded of the debt of gratitude? Is it really . . . because *compensation* is expected to cancel it?" Then the treaty of alliance had absolved the claim because it stated that "there shall be no after claim of compensation on one side or the other, whatever may be the event of the war."

7

They did, finally, what was the only sensible thing to do, no doubt, and all was saved save honor. They ignored the national signature on those pieces of paper, left the treaties in abeyance—since Jefferson would not allow Hamilton to pronounce them void—and issued a proclamation of neutrality. On April 23, with Genet already on American soil. Only there again Jefferson's tortuous mind must display itself. He would not permit the word "neutrality" to be used because Hamilton would not suffer any blandishments of France to be included. Alliance without fulfillment, friendship without obligations, treaties honored but not observed, neutrality practised but not admitted—there was his magnificent solution. All citizens enjoined to ab-

stain from hostile acts—and the treaties authorizing them to perform such acts on behalf of the French still the law of the land.

And then he went away from the Cabinet meeting and began, anonymously and by proxy of course, to attack the proclamation which he had just signed. It was "pusillanimous" because it did not refer to America's friendship for France; it was an English neutrality and not a "manly" one; its proceedings "towards the conspirators against human liberty" were "unjustifiable in principle, in interest and in respect to the wishes of our constituents;" and Congress should have been consulted. And Madison found it "in truth a most unfortunate error. It wounds the national honor by seeming to disregard the stipulated duties to France. It wounds the popular feelings by a seeming indifference to the cause of liberty. And it seems to violate the forms . . . of the Constitution by making the executive magistrate the organ of . . . the nation in relation to war and peace, subjects appropriated to other departments of the government." And if France triumphed, the "unfortunate" proclamation would be a "millstone" for Washington.

And in Jefferson's *National Gazette,* a gentleman signing himself *Veritas,* and supposed in spite of denials to be Jefferson—a copy in Genet's papers is ascribed by him to Jefferson with the notation that the fact "has become known" —a gentleman signing himself *Veritas* informed the President in June that "had you, Sir, before you ventured to issue a proclamation which appears to have given much uneasiness, consulted the general sentiments of your fellow citizens, you would have found them from one extremity of the

Union to the other firmly attached to the cause of France. You would not have found them disposed to consider it a 'duty' to forget their debt of gratitude to the French nation; or to view with unconcern the magnanimous efforts of a faithful ally to baffle the infernal projects of those despots who have confederated for the purpose of crushing her infant liberty. Neither would you have found them so far divested of the feelings of men as to treat with 'impartiality' and equal 'friendship' those tigers who so lately deluged our country with the blood of thousands, and the men who generously flew to her rescue and became her deliverers."

An idiotic enough paragraph, but not beyond the powers of the Jefferson who was soon to write to Mazzei that "it would give you a fever were I to name to you the apostates who have gone over to [English] heresies, men who were Samsons in the field and Solomons in the council"—the reference to Washington was undeniable—"but who have had their heads shorn by the harlot of England."

As for *Veritas*, "let me entreat you," he continued, "to deal candidly with the people, and without loss of time to remove their anxiety by informing them whether it is intended that the treaties with France are to be observed or not"—of course Jefferson did not want them observed, he simply wanted them talked about so as to annoy Hamilton. And "I am aware, Sir, that some court satellites may have deceived you with respect to the sentiments of your fellow citizens. The first magistrate of a country . . . seldom knows the real state of the nation, particularly if he be so much buoyed up by official importance as to think it beneath his dignity to mix occasionally with the people. . . . Let not the little buzz of the aristocratic few and their contemptible

minions, of speculators, Tories and British emissaries be mistaken for the exalted and general voice of the American people."

And when *Pacificus*, who was Hamilton, came later to the defense of the proclamation, "for God's sake," Jefferson appealed to Madison, "take up your pen" and "cut him to pieces in the face of the public." Something which *Helvidius* Madison was not so eager to do; but he turned to it, and the exchange was memorable, for they could both write devastatingly, the "great little Madison" and the brilliant one at the Treasury. And soon they were all at it, *Cato,* and *Camillus,* and *Ironicus,* and every other classical Tom, and Dick, and Harry. While Genet read and listened.

8

He was coming—it was May, and he had been in the country since April 8—and Madison wished anxiously "that the reception of Genet may testify what I believe to be the real affections of the people. It is the more desirable as a seasonable plum after the bitter pills which it seems must be administered." Madison had "always supposed that the terms of the treaty made some sort of difference . . . between France and nations not in treaty, particularly Great Britain," and "in explaining our own engagements under the treaty with France it would be honorable as well as just to adhere to the sense that would at the time have been put on them." But "peace is no doubt to be preserved at any price that honor and good faith will permit"—and let the people cheer. As a seasonable plum.

And a little while later, "I think it certain that [Genet]

will be misled if he takes either the fashionable cant of the cities or the cold caution of the Government for the sense of the public; and I am equally persuaded that nothing but the habit of implicit respect will save the Executive from blame if through the mask of neutrality a secret Anglomany should betray itself."

He was coming—and in the streets the roaring was more vociferous, the rabbles more violent, the rum more potent. *Ça Ira* and *Marseillaise,* they tramped and chanted, and tore down royal emblems, ornaments and street signs, beat each other up in water front brawls, English and French, white cockades and tricolor. Cheering for Jefferson, France and democracy. Hooting for Hamilton, Washington, England, aristocrats and neutrality. Long afterwards, John Adams was to remember "the terrorism excited by Genet." The time when "ten thousand people in the streets of Philadelphia, day after day, threatened to drag Washington out of his house and effect a revolution in the government, or compel it to declare war in favor of the French Revolution and against England." The time when Adams himself had "judged it prudent and necessary to order chests of arms from the war office" with which to protect his house. Because a boy from Versailles was come to America to accomplish his father's dearest wish.

Sound and fury, rabbles and rum—and a carriage hurrying along the muddy roads from the South in a great din of bells.

CHAPTER VIII

GUNS AND BELLS

1

IT had taken the frigate *Embuscade* forty-eight days across the Atlantic—contrary winds, fifteen days to round Cape Finisterre, then forced south of the Azores, and she had captured some prizes too—and it was in the first week of April only that she had found herself off Carolina. And while she had been expected to land Genet at Philadelphia, when he "recognized" Charleston he "could not resist the desire of seeing this city, so famous for all the cruelties which the English practised there." Charleston, the home of Izard and Gillou, those old friends of his father. It was decided to go ashore there, on the morning of April 8, 1793.

The weather was fine, with a calm sea, but there was not enough water at the bar for the frigate, so with twenty-one guns to salute them they got into a small boat and had themselves rowed up to the town. The bells were ringing, the Battery, the wharves, even the roofs of the houses were black with people; an "enormous crowd," attracted by the presence of the frigate and by the desire for news of the French war with England, was watching the little skiff, waiting for the young man in the tricolor sash to land. Mangourit, the

Consul, was there, pressing forward. What was the news, and who was this young man? The French Minister Plenipotentiary to the United States. He stepped ashore, and Charleston went wild, roaring a welcome to him.

So Genet came to America. He was thirty years and three months old, precisely.

2

They took him immediately to see the Governor, General Moultrie, the Senators, the Representatives, all the big people, and "this first visit astonished many persons who were accustomed to see the Ministers of the old régime require with pride that all those magistrates of a free country should visit them first. The aristocrats and the English partisans who are very numerous in this city did not fail to condemn my conduct; but the true friends of liberty saw in my efforts only a desire promptly to establish that fraternity which must exist between us and their citizens. I had reason to congratulate myself because in this instance I had followed only the dictates of my heart."

And they all came crowding in to return his calls; General Moultrie, General Pinckney, Izard, Commodore Gillou, Rutleges, Manigaults, Le Garés, Grimkés—he kept a long list of them. Everyone was eager, friendly, cheering for France—he did not mix with many Federalists—it was April in Charleston. There were deputations and addresses, processions, banquets, guns, bells, speeches, toasts. Some of the most important men were republican. America was a splendid place. And he himself was splendid, he made a fine impression; a "very handsome man with a fine open countenance, and pleasing, unaffected manners;" a "good person,

fine ruddy complexion, quite active and seems always to be in a bustle, more like a busy man than a man of business." His system, one contemporary thought, "is to laugh us into the war if he can."

There he was, polished, witty, gay, energetic, cordial, good looking, a young man of very great personal charm, of very cultivated taste, of very striking social presence; the boy in white of Versailles under the Republic's tricolor sash. Very well fitted for that post of French Ambassador which, according to Moreau de Saint Méry, required "firmness joined to much politeness. To be very affable, to see everything, to hear everything, to gather in everything without affectation, without nervousness; perform the diplomatic role at his dinner table, attract to it cleverly the influential members of the House of Representatives and Senate, and never allow the English Ambassador to serve better madeira at his house."

The English in Charleston were "furious" because of his success, and "the present incapacity of their shipping"—the *Embuscade* was still taking prizes—and "their violence exasperates the Americans and serves our interests." If only he kept his head and his temper, held his tongue, looked in the right corners and listened to the proper persons. A little difficult to do when one was impetuous, filled with impatient zeal, breathless with magnificent enterprises, and not always so prudent. A little difficult to hear anything coherently with all the guns and bells.

3

He talked a good deal with Moultrie, who gave him "generously of his advice, of his understanding and of his

ideas." There was a "complete confidence" between them, and the Governor, "that venerable veteran, a sincere friend of our revolution, gave me all the assistance within his power."

And he talked with Izard; a memorable conversation during a night spent at The Elms. And there, right at the start, Genet might have learned wisdom, and corrected some of the little notes in his files, if he had not been so sure of himself, so confident of his sagacity. For Izard spoke "in exalted terms" of Washington and Hamilton; he described Jefferson as "an ambitious and intriguing demagogue" who, with Madison, was trying to "disgust" Washington with his office "in order to assume the reins of government" himself; and he told Genet that Jefferson and Madison "pretend to be great republicans. . . . They will do everything in their power to secure you on their side and will be friendly to you as long as your country or yourself may be serviceable to their ambitious views. *Place no confidence in them,*" Izard warned the son of his old friend, "but be well assured that if you adhere to General Washington and to his tried friend Colonel Hamilton you will follow the safest and wisest course."

But Genet replied that "I thank you, my dear Sir, for your good advice and friendly intentions; but I assure you that I shall have no other friends in America but those who will be friendly to France and to the cause of liberty." Those were the young man's words, uttered in the grand manner which, it seemed, a Minister Plenipotentiary must adopt, and Izard exclaimed that "oh then I see that you are going to fall into the snares of Mr. Jefferson and his party, and very probably will become their victim."

Memorable, prophetic words, the whole plot of Genet's official career in America in those few sentences. For if he had listened to Izard, if he had given him even the benefit of a doubt, Genet might still not have acted any differently—it would have been for him, always, to decide what was best to do—but he would have been on his guard against Jefferson, he would have come to the State department with the necessary grains of salt and to the President's House without some of the chips placed on his shoulder by Jefferson, he would not have put all his eggs so trustingly in Jefferson's false bottom basket. And when it was all over, Genet was obliged to "confess there was something prophetic in those words [of Izard's] which I have frequently recollected since I was so basely abandoned by that same Thomas Jefferson . . . after I had followed his impulse or the advice of his most confidential friends in everything."

4

Genet did not waste a minute. Civic banquets were all well enough, but he was always temperate at table, and he had other things to do. He was only in Charleston ten days, but that time was of "great utility" to him. He informed himself concerning the popular state of mind towards France, and concerning "the necessity of bringing the people back quickly from the unfavorable attitude towards us fostered in its midst, in order to set its will working for the success of our negotiations." He loaded ships with supplies for Santo Domingo, he ordered timber cuttings for the French navy, he "laid the foundations" for certain "military and political movements" which will have to be examined on

another page; and he armed privateers, in accordance with his understanding of the treaties.

His understanding and Moultrie's, for the Governor "allowed me immediately to arm some privateers, while taking certain precautions in order still *for a while* to safeguard the neutrality of the United States." In fact, "he immediately had the forts . . . put in a state of defense." He also "seconded with zeal the operations entrusted to me for provisioning the navy, the armies and the colonies of the Republic." And "concerning other sections of my instructions, he furnished me useful information."

Four privateers, the *Republican,* the *Sans Culotte,* the *Anti George* and the *Patriot Genet,* and one of them was at sea within a week, and Mangourit ready to condemn any prizes that came in under the new Admiralty authority vested in him. And the *Embuscade* was cruising north, sending four of her captures back to Charleston, taking one along with her into Delaware Bay where, on April 25, she was to seize the British *Grange* at anchor. And on May 15 two of the *Patriot Genet's* prizes reporting themselves at Philadelphia. All under Genet's instructions, and his credentials not yet presented, himself as yet only a great din of guns and bells advancing up the coast. And the Federal Government in a great sweat; Hamilton very much annoyed, Jefferson very pleased with the "old spirit of '76 rekindling the newspapers from Boston to Charleston."

He was coming by land, and some said that it was because of the British frigates off the Capes, while Ternant complained to his Government that "it is very regrettable that, charged as he says with interesting negotiations, he should have taken the longest route to reach the place where

they are to be discussed." But Genet knew exactly what he was doing. They had told him at Charleston that the French treaties would probably be disregarded, and he was ready for that—France was generous, France would not insist on the impossible—and they had also told him that it was doubtful whether he would be received, and he had decided immediately to travel overland, in order to "work up public opinion on the way, and arrive at [Philadelphia] only with the certainty of being received there with all the éclat due to my rank."

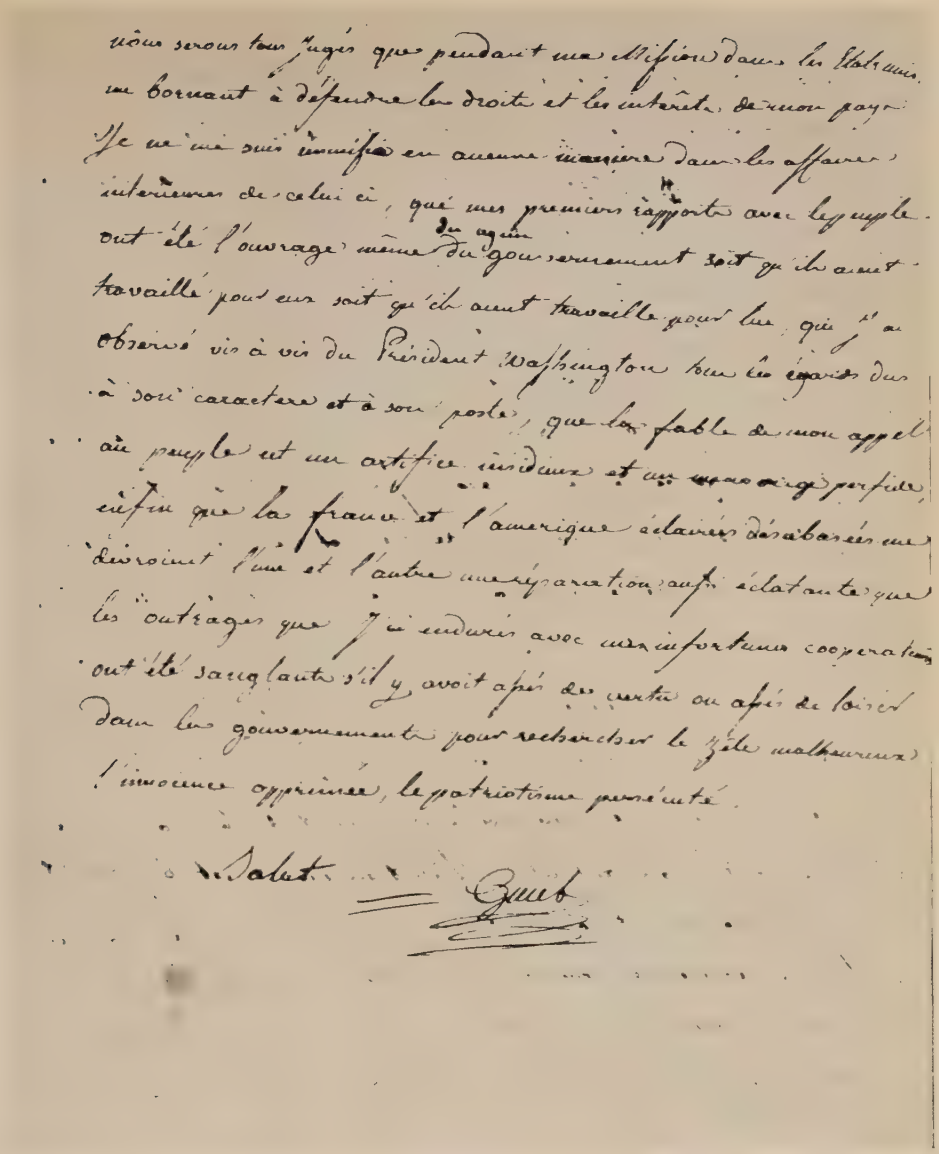
To come to Philadelphia with commotion; not at all as his father had once advised him—never to arrive noisily so as to make people ask Who is this, Who is this—on the contrary, to set all the guns and bells going, turn out the rabbles, and put his name on every tongue. There was a British cabal, he suspected, to have him rejected—he was later to accuse Noailles of instigating it—and he would forestall it by having himself received by the American people with an uproar that would make itself heard all the way to Mount Vernon, that "charming retreat." He had been repudiated once already in his career, repudiated and finally dismissed by Catherine II, and that was not to happen again.

He said some important things to Mangourit; he bought six horses for his carriage—four of them from General Pinckney—he "prepared all his batteries;" Moultrie and "all the true republicans of Charleston" gave him letters to persons all along the route; they sent messengers on ahead—"to announce me to the people," *erased*—Moultrie and Izard insisted on making the first stages with him; and on April 19 he started.

5

And now the guns are pounding and the bells are ringing in good earnest; one cannot pretend to listen to them all, to watch all the deputations and "fraternal hugs," to attend all the "civic festivals," to hear all the addresses, and speeches, and toasts. There is room only for the canary—"if a young canary, pupil of a republican, can give you pleasure I would like to send you one"—and for the visit to the Catawba Indians at Camden. Genet brought them presents, and strong waters "in which they were not long in overindulging;" according to custom he stood godfather for a papoose, and named him Genet Republican Frenchman; and Yoopakooma, the Sachem, sent him a letter in French, welcoming his "brother from the lands of the dawn" on behalf of "the men of the West."

The *Marseillaise,* children screeching, dogs barking, French flags flapping in the rain—it rained a great deal during the journey, and the streams were heavily swollen at the fords—Genet goes by in a splash of red mud, along the miserable roads until he hits the Boston Post Road at Petersburgh, in Virginia, the first town worthy of the name since Charleston; Genet goes by, and everywhere rabbles are cheering, rum is flowing, belfries are chiming, important citizens are standing hat in hand with glowing "sentiments." The messengers precede him from town to town, and the clamor increases. They are waiting for him, and the shouting deepens under the clanging bells. He goes on and on, and the people are running after his carriage, roaring for France, damning the Proclamation which has come to meet him. He reads it and smiles. He has accomplished



GENET TO JEFFERSON

Last page of the duplicate letter of 1797. "That the fable of my appeal to the people is an insidious artifice and a perfidious lie. . . ." Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the Genet papers.

his purpose—for he is traversing rural, inland countrysides hostile to the Federalist excise laws; he is crossing the republican South.

The fact, perhaps not thoroughly appreciated by him, should not be forgotten. The accident of landfall—one must suppose it to have been an accident—had put him ashore at Charleston; his progress towards Philadelphia took him inevitably through the most anti-Federalist, anti-British part of the country, through the Carolinas, through intensely republican Virginia, through a region best calculated to do its yelling for France and democracy. It was an accident—there is no ground for assuming the contrary—which may well have determined the march of events, given its tone to the public attitude towards him and colored all his first impressions of America. Certainly if he had landed at Boston, if he had come down through the Federalist New England cities, through Massachusetts and Connecticut, it would have been different, there would not have been so much jubilation in front of him, so much noise behind him.

Salisbury, Richmond, Genet hurries on—his duty obliges him, he tells them, avoiding the civic receptions of which he is now so fearfully weary—and "the good American farmers" have received him "with open arms and under their modest roofs;" they have offered him "much grain and flour;" his journey has been "a succession of civic festivals," and he has been "clasped in the arms of a multitude that had rushed out to meet me." True Americans "are at the height of joy. The whole of America has risen to acknowledge in me the Minister of the French Republic." He has succeeded. The American people has received him.

And now the big cities. Baltimore—but there the wel-

come is not quite so boisterous; the place is full of merchants who are under the thumb of England, and "it is unfortunate to be obliged to confess that wherever I find the mercantile spirit, there the partisans of England combat ours," *erased.* The Federalist merchants, whose power he perhaps underestimates. But the important place now is Philadelphia. It is there that he expects to see "the great results"; because it is there that the affairs of government are carried on, there that are hatched "the schemes and intrigues of an enemy embassy which is working to turn the Americans away from us." That embassy, he believes, is responsible for the proclamation of neutrality—although he has been informed that Jefferson himself wrote it—and he thinks that he is aware of all the "underhanded plots" that are being prepared. He has even been told that he is to receive an address of welcome, and that the Government secretly encourages it, and he sees through those "tactics" immediately. He sees that "all this show of popularity" intended for him is "set in motion on the one hand only to excuse the vain formality of my reception by the Government at the allied Courts, and on the other hand to dazzle me, to put me and the French Republic to sleep, and gain time without taking any action."

He sees all this; at all events, he thinks that he sees it—he put it all down afterwards for Jefferson, whom, in retrospect, he blamed for it—and so when a deputation of French citizens from Philadelphia comes to him at Baltimore to advise him of the public manifestations awaiting him —a processon of five hundred carriages to meet him at Chester, and all the bells of Philadelphia swinging—and to beg him to send word on ahead of his approach, he refuses.

He will go instead without ceremony into the town. Bells —what does he care for bells! Hypocritical bells, as he considers them. He has three hundred leagues of bells ringing in his ears, honest, republican bells, and the wholehearted uproar of four States behind him. All along that long road he has "collected without intermediary the fraternal sentiments of the American people for the French people." He has "destroyed the prejudices which had been skilfully inspired," he has been encouraged by the people's good wishes, enlightened as to its true sentiments by numerous addresses, "sustained by its imposing voice."

Now he will go modestly, quietly, democratically into the town, and see what they think of that. He leaves his carriage and his baggage behind, and takes a seat in the public coach.

6

And in Philadelphia, as a matter of fact, they were afraid that the Government might be intending to suppress any attempt at a popular welcome; they believed that Noailles had been closeted with the President for that purpose; and the republican press was beating the drums. Genet must be met with a tremendous reception at Gray's Ferry, and "may we not hope that the true Republicans of this country will hoist the three colored flag, the emblem of patriotism; and to complete the spectacle that our fair Pennsylvanians will decorate their elegant persons and adorn their hair with patriotic ribbands."

And on the morning of May 16 the streets were seething; scouts on horseback were out on the roads beyond the Ferry watching for the French Minister's carriage; the

Embuscade was to give the signal of his approach with three cannon shots. The frigate had herself arrived on May 2, with great banners streaming from her mastheads—"Enemies of equality, reform or tremble!" at the foremast; "Freemen, behold we are your friends and brothers!" at the mainmast; and at the mizzen "We are armed for the defense of the rights of man!"—and her sailors were the cocks of the walk in all the waterfront gin mills. In the belfries, the bell ringers were ready at their ropes; at the City Tavern they were polishing up the mugs, putting a special zip into the punch that stood always on the side table; crowds were tramping out to Gray's—"a very inconsiderable number indeed," Hamilton reported, "stated high at a hundred persons;" a swarming multitude of several thousands already, as others saw it, and "what a racket was made with the Citizen Genet," Alexander Graydon, himself a Federalist, admitted. "The most enthusiastic homage was too cold to welcome his arrival."

And suddenly, at about one o'clock in the afternoon, the Baltimore stage coach was at the Ferry—and there he was. There he was in the public conveyance, riding like any plain citizen, the French Minister Plenipotentiary to the United States! Magnificent republican simplicity—not like Hammond with his British liveries, or the haughty Spaniards, or the former French royalist Moustier who had been in the habit of bringing two or three dishes cooked to his taste with him to Hamilton's when he dined at his house. There was Genet, sitting quietly in the coach, trying to slip past them into the town without any fuss, without any pomp or parade, without any private coach with footmen in yellow such as "His High Mightiness" the President employed.

He was recognized, pointed out; the crowds began to cheer; word was shouted along in front of him. The formal reception at the Ferry had misfired, but there were the thundering streets before him, the heaving, roaring sidewalks, and up in the belfries they caught the commotion from below and set the bells all pealing. He made his entry after all, and it was "a triumph for liberty." And he was "fascinating," in the opinion of one young lady who saw him go by; so "easy, affable and pleasing." He was "quite overcome with the affectionate joy that appeared in every face." In fact, "it would be impossible, my dear, to give you any idea of the scene." Of course it was true "that a few disaffected persons did try to check the ardor of the people, but they had the mortification to find all their efforts blasted," and were obliged themselves, "contrary to the feelings of their hearts," to "join the general torrent and affect a cordiality" which they did not experience. It was all "great and interesting in the highest degree. The streets were crowded, and the city was in a tumult of joy."

So Genet came sweeping at last into Philadelphia.

PART II

THE CITIZEN

1793–1834

"When treaties speak, the agents of nations must obey."

CITIZEN GENET TO THOMAS JEFFERSON
Philadelphia, July 9, 1793.

Citizen Genet's Passport.

"In the name of the Nation,

"To all civil and military officers. . . . Pass freely, without delaying or allowing him to be delayed, Edmond Charles Genet, a French Citizen, Minister Plenipotentiary of the French Republic to the United States of North America, Adjutant General Colonel of her armies; aged twenty-nine years, five feet eight inches in height, hair and eyebrows auburn, forehead broad, eyes blue, nose aquiline, mouth small, chin round, face round; going to Philadelphia with four domestics, two carriages and his effects. . . .

"Lebrun."

CHAPTER I

BONNETS AND BUMPERS

1

IN the midst of the clamor, Genet was forming his opinions; filling long double sheets with the rough drafts of his appraisal of "the ardent and sublime love of the good country people, of the old soldiers, of the poor but industrious men of the cities, for the principles of France," and of "the base idolatry of the great capitalists, of the big merchants, for the English constitution."

The men, he prepared to tell his Government, who "are today in charge of [American] affairs have preserved so little shame and so little self-respect; they had so openly signified their aversion for our revolution that the enemies of France, the Tories . . . in the big cities seemed to doubt if I would be received; the newspapers dared to publish that the French Republic would not be recognized."

Well, the Republic had been recognized officially—this was following his reception by the President—after it had been publicly recognized by "the good American people, which may perhaps have had some influence on the policy of the Cabinet." It was likely, he thought, that he would not have been recognized "if I had arrived direct in Phila-

delphia. Everything had been arranged to counteract the first impulse of enthusiasm of the Americans. The neutrality . . . had been proclaimed, but my journey through the southern States rendered these designs abortive. I had time to rally our friends, to prepare my reception from afar, and to present myself at my post only with the certainty of being brought to it by the people. Everything succeeded beyond my hopes."

Genet knew that the decision to receive him had not been reached until after the bells had begun to ring for him; he was convinced that the Government had been driven against its will into acknowledging him—and when he wrote these reports he had already been listening to Jefferson, who "gave me useful information concerning the men in power, and did not conceal from me that Senator Morris and . . . Hamilton, devoted to the interests of England, exercised the greatest influence on the President's mind, and that it was only with the greatest trouble that he [Jefferson] was able to counteract their efforts"—and as for neutrality, "you will be able to appreciate the worth of the declarations . . . which [Washington, *erased*] they hastened to issue, when you learn of the sensibility, the complete devotion of our American brothers."

So that his journey north had brought Genet to Philadelphia deeply prejudiced against the President and his Federalist advisers. He had had very little difficulty in discovering "that a very distinct party had arisen against Washington: his political enemies are especially numerous in the rural districts; men are to be found there more sincere, more energetic, less commercially attached to the interests . . . of England, and ready to testify without hesitation to

what they like and what they hate." And they had liked Genet; he had been delighted by the "frank and cordial manner" in which he had been welcomed everywhere, and "from what I learned then . . . I have every reason to believe that without those fortunate preliminaries my recognition by the Government would have been dubious."

Now "true Republicans triumph"— he composed this in June—"but the old [Nestor, *erased*] Washington, who is very different from the man whose name is engraved in history, does not forgive me my successes, and the zeal with which the entire city rushed to my house at the moment when a handful of English merchants were on their way to thank him for his proclamation."

2

For Philadelphia had not finished celebrating Genet's arrival. On May 16 and 17, the French citizens, the German citizens—"horrified to see a people from which we are descended be the first to take its stand under the banner of the conspirators against liberty;" to which he replied that he was sure that the Germans would one day free themselves from their "innumerable despots"—the American citizens, led by Rittenhouse, Dallas, Charles Biddle and other eminently respectable characters; they all came huzzaing to the City Tavern with speeches and addresses which it is perhaps not necessary to enumerate. Biddle spoke of the good faith of treaties, and of the assistance which American friendship could render to France without participating in actual warfare; and Genet, from his balcony, was glad to see that "if gratitude be not acknowledged a virtue among despots, it is evidently such among free men." And the

bonds between France and America must be strengthened, because without them "what would become of our two nations, exposed [to the] hatred and the treachery of all the tyrants of the earth who, you may rest assured, are at this moment armed, not only against France, but against liberty itself."

Huzza! Huzza! He was quite in earnest; but how curious it is, surely, to catch the echoes of 1917 in 1793, and to realize how the world goes around and around.

The tone of it all was well expressed by a citizen who, in one of the gazettes, told Genet that "if the oak is prostrated by the blast, the ivy which has entwined itself around it must participate in the ruin. Should France be subjugated by the confederated tyrants, woe unto America, for if a direct attack should be made upon her liberties, the seductive power of corruption may make them pass away like a meteor." The republican press now had its second wind, and Genet had "volumes" to write home. "The voice of the people continues to neutralize [the] President's declaration of neutrality . . . I receive addresses from every part of the continent."

And how it infuriated Hamilton. While Jefferson referred with delight to "a vast concourse of people" going to the City Tavern, Hamilton knew that "not a tenth part of the city" had been present at the meeting in the State House Yard on the evening of Genet's arrival, and a bystander had assured him that only five or six hundred had assembled to formulate the address of welcome. Of course, "on their way to the City Tavern their number was . . . considerably increased. A crowd will always draw a crowd, whatever be the purpose. Curiosity will supply the place of attachment

to or interest in the object." As for the promoters, "with very few exceptions they were the same men who have been uniformly the enemies and the disturbers of the Government of the United States." It would not surprise Hamilton "if we see ere long a curious combination growing up to control its . . . foreign politics at the expense of the peace of the country." For "we too have our disorganizers."

And he deplored any "fruitless display of zeal" for the French cause. "It may do us much harm, and it can do France no good, unless indeed we are to embark in the war with her, which nobody is so hardy as to avow, though some secretly machinate it." And as for comparing the French Revolution to the American, "would to Heaven that the comparison were just. Would to Heaven we could discern in the mirror of French affairs the same humanity, the same decorum, the same gravity, the same order, the same dignity, the same solemnity which distinguished the [American] cause."

No, Hamilton did not like the comparison. "When I contemplate the horrid . . . massacres of [September]; when I observe that a Marat and a Robespierre, the notorious prompters of those bloody scenes, sit triumphantly in the Convention . . . when I see an unfortunate Prince . . . brought . . . to the block . . . when I find the doctrines of atheism openly advanced . . . when I see the sword of fanaticism extended to force a political creed . . . when I perceive passion, tumult and violence usurping . . . reason and cool deliberation . . . I acknowledge that I am glad to believe there is no real resemblance between what was the cause of America and what is the cause of France . . . I regret whatever has a tendency to compound them, and I feel

anxious . . . that the ebullition of inconsiderate men among us may not tend to involve our reputation in the issue."

And he was right; for the peace of the country's bourgeoisie and for the capitalistic prosperity of the Federalists, he was right. Have nothing to do with red, shall one say soviet, France. Only unfortunately Genet had some treaties in his pocket, and there were Jeffersonian republican rabbles cheering for France.

3

And Genet had every intention of seeing the treaties lived up to, while waiting to negotiate new ones. Not to the last pound of flesh, perhaps; he understood the instinctive pacifism of the Americans; he had sensed their commercial reluctance to go to war; while it was certainly his secret duty eventually to spur them into the conflict, he was not openly demanding such a course; and if a renewed mutual guaranteeing of territory was a *sine qua non* of commercial privileges to be granted to the Americans in the French West Indies, still the French Government was aware of the "great disproportion" between the warlike resources of France and America, it realized that "for a long time to come the guarantee asked of [the Americans] will hardly be more than nominal on their side, whereas it will be a genuine one on ours which we will hasten to . . . put into effect by sending sufficient forces into the American ports in order to shelter them from all insults and facilitate their traffic with our French islands"—a paternalism the tactlessness of which seemed entirely to escape the logical, managerial French mind.

Genet, in his first replies to public addresses, had made

it clear that France did not propose to force America into an irksome obedience to treaty obligations—the belligerency which he later hoped to promote was another, private matter—and he immediately said the same thing to Jefferson upon presenting his credentials on May 18. The Secretary of State, reporting the interview to Madison, was all in a twitter of relief. "It is impossible," he wrote, "for anything to be more affectionate, more magnanimous than the purport of [Genet's] mission. . . . We wish you to do nothing but what is for your own good, and we will do all in our power to promote it. Cherish your own peace and prosperity. . . . We see in you the only person on earth who can love us sincerely and merit to be so loved! In short, he offers everything and asks nothing"—although Jefferson felt certain that "the offers will be opposed" and suspected that "they will not be accepted," for Madison could not "conceive what is passing in our conclave," and it was evident that "one or two at least, under pretense of avoiding war on the one side [England], have no great antipathy to run foul of it on the other."

But when it came to the commercial clauses, the sections concerning privateers and prizes, Genet had the very strictest special instructions to "familiarize himself thoroughly with the meaning of the . . . treaties [of] 1778 and to supervise with attention the execution of the articles . . . favorable to the commerce and navigation of the French Republic." He was to represent obligations which might appear onerous to the Americans "as the just price of the independence which the French nation secured for them"—they wrote that down solemnly—he was to be "severe" about it, he was "religiously" to enforce the stipulations concerning

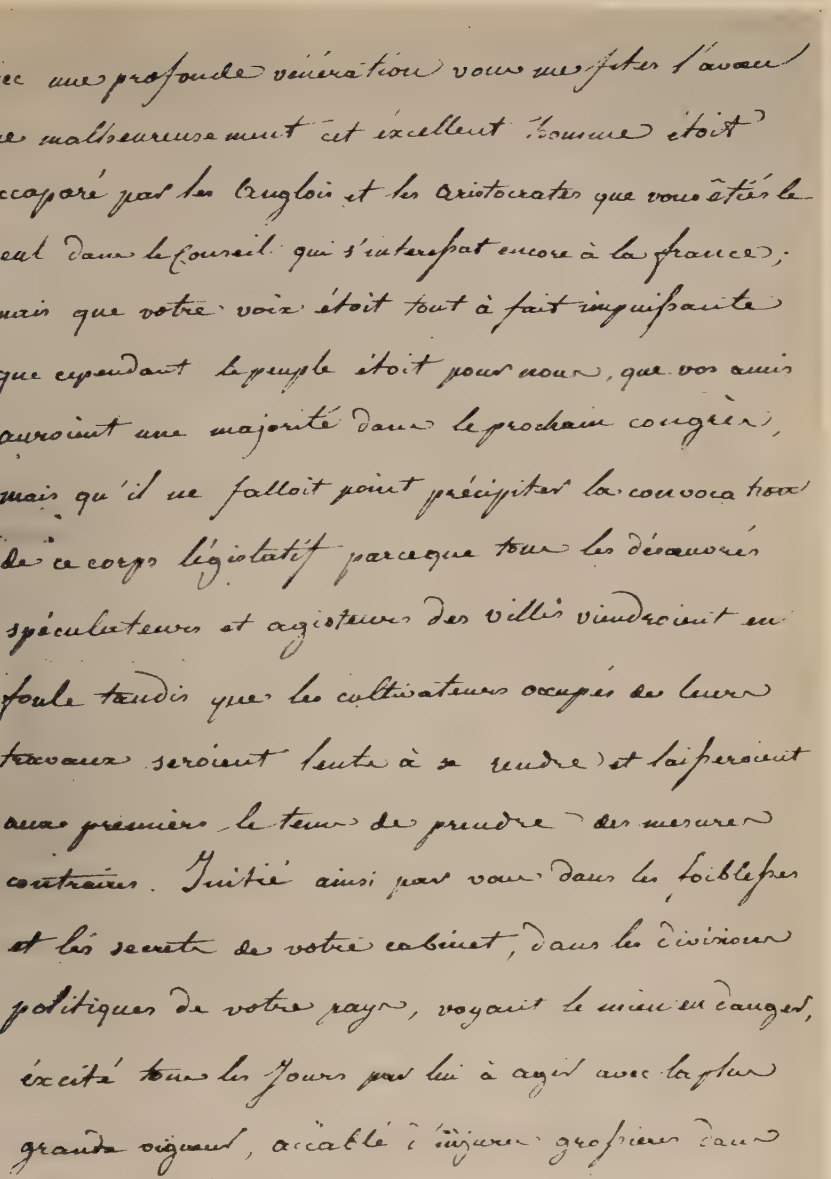
prizes and enemy corsairs, to "insist rigorously" on the prohibition in American ports of "all arming of privateers, *except on behalf of the French nation.*"

And all of this Genet was determined to do, was obliged to do since he was so ordered. He had started right in at Charleston arming privateers, and one of his first cares had been to forward blank letters of marque to Ternant at Philadelphia, to be distributed to those shipowners "who strike you as deserving this proof of confidence," although, in order to safeguard the "present neutrality" of the United States, it would be more proper if the commanders were Frenchmen and if the vessels declared themselves to be armed merchantmen. So that Genet, too, was perfectly willing to lend himself to American neutrality as an official attitude—but whereas the Government saw it in conjunction with a setting aside of the French treaties, Genet would only accept the arrangement provided that the treaties were maintained in spite of it.

"As long as the States," he was to proclaim, "assembled in Congress, shall not have determined that this solemn [treaty] engagement shall not be performed, no one has the right to shackle our operations and to annul their effect." And when Jefferson tried, in his bland way, to tell him that "without appealing to treaties, we are at peace with [the Powers] by the law of nature: for, by nature's law, man is at peace with man," Genet simply stared at his platitudes.

4

He had presented his credentials on May 18, and on that same day Jefferson took him to the President, and "here the scene changes." Medallions of the French royal family on



avec une profonde vénération vous me jeter l'aveu
que malheureusement cet excellent homme étoit
accaparé par les Anglois et les aristocrates que vous êtes le
seul dans le Conseil qui s'intéressât encore à la France;
mais que votre voix étoit tout à fait impuissante
que cependant le peuple étoit pour nous, que vos amis
auroient une majorité dans le prochain congrès,
mais qu'il ne falloit point précipiter la convocation
de ce corps législatif parceque tous les désœuvrés
spéculateurs et agioteurs des villes viendroient en
foule tandis que les cultivateurs occupés de leurs
travaux seroient toute à se rendre et laisseroient
aux premiers le temps de prendre des mesures
contraires. Initié ainsi par vous dans les foiblesses
et les secrets de votre cabinet, dans les divisions
politiques de votre pays, voyant le mien en danger,
excité tous les jours par lui à agir avec la plus
grande vigueur, accablé d'injures grossières dans

GENET TO JEFFERSON

SAMPLE PAGES OF THE DUPLICATE LETTER OF 1797

"Initiated by you in the weaknesses and secrets of your Cabinet. . . ." Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the Genet papers.

toutes les feuilles du gouvernement, obligé de m'écarter de ce qu'on appelle les premieres sociétés de Philadelphie qui rendoient aux autres Ministres et aux agents du prétendu régent les hommages les plus vils, je ne pouvois que me livrer à vous qui paroissiés si bien disposé, au peuple qui paroissoit si chaud et tirer tout le parti possible de ma position non en traitre et en fourbe, mais avec bonne foi et courage : je l'ai fait. J'ai donné à ma correspondance officielle le ton le plus ferme. Je n'ai considéré la proclamation de neutralité et toutes les décisions adresses et réponses qui l'ont suivie que comme des opinions parceque des traités ratifiés sont des lois obligatoires qui ne peuvent être annulés que par la guerre ou par d'autres diplomes revêtus de toutes les formalités que + le droit en gens et + de chaque pays + les Constitutions prescrivent. J'ai reclamé auprès de toutes les autorités de la Confederation l'execution de nos pactes et je me suis entretenu sans déguisement des intentions de la france, de mes differents avec le gouvernement

the wall, and a formal, chilly reception, "perfectly neutral and insignificant"— so it seemed to Genet, who, at that, could not have been expecting the magnificent Washington to fall into his arms.

From now on "it is no longer with the people that I . . . will deal directly." It is with "men who, raised yesterday to power, seem already to consider their positions as their property; who, excessively jealous of their prerogatives, impatiently suffer the homage given to others; who, forgetful of the troubles of the people during its revolution, like to concentrate in themselves all the glory, all the good that has resulted from it." No guns and bells to be heard at the Morris house on High Street, the abode of His Excellency. In the parlor only the tall, thin, slow moving man that Senator Maclay described, "his complexion pale, nay, almost cadaverous, his voice hollow and indistinct, owing as I believe to artificial teeth." A stiff, ungracious, rather frigid man who, as Gouverneur Morris had found out, could not be slapped on the back.

And Genet described him. "Until now Washington has been depicted as friendly to France, simple, popular, the enemy of show. You have known Lafayette, well, you have known *Vasington.* The latter was so fortunate as to find himself on a more stable stage, he has consequently been obliged to take part in fewer intrigues; in the same situation [as Lafayette] he would have closed his life with the same conclusion. He is extremely reserved, that is [because of] his hypocrisy; he is easy to approach, but in reality he is haughty. His settled expression is always half smiling, he caresses you, but he is then thinking of deceiving you; he has been persuaded that that was political art; in front

of the people he always has his hat in his hand, that was one of Lafayette's great tricks; but in spite of all external grimaces one can easily guess his policy."

He was accused of having put his servants in livery, of having permitted the Senate to decree that the coinage of the United States should bear his effigy. He was the first man in America who had dared "to flaunt a carriage with six horses, a very imprudent step, I might say almost criminal in a country from which luxury should be banished and in which men and horses are wanted for agriculture." In the new Federal city to be called "Washington Town" he had allowed the President's house to be built first, while the plans were not even made for that destined for the legislators—Genet was being excessively silly, for once, but not any sillier than Jefferson and his republicans—and "all these petty acts . . . obviously reveal an aristocratic or monarchical tendency." Physically, "no expression, and again at first glance one might take him for Lafayette." The people around him "flatter him, worship him; some of them make use of him, others make fun of him."

No, Genet did not like Washington. He thought him a pompous old fool, worse than that a designing, Anglomaniac aristocrat. And Washington was to consider him an arrogant young snipe, and unmitigated republican pest. The two men were poles apart, in intellect, in temperament and in philosophy. And Washington had Hamilton always at his side, talking in his ear, while Genet chose to listen to the delectable Jefferson. "Tomorrow," he wrote hopefully on the very day of his reception by the President, "I will have my first conference . . . with Mr. Jefferson. . . . His principles, his experience, his talents, his devotion to the cause

which we defend, inspire in me the greatest confidence, and make me hope that we will reach the glorious goal which the cause of humanity in general must make us desirous of achieving."

Poor deluded young man—he was doomed from the start.

5

For it will be well, henceforth, to remember that in his early dealings with the American Government, Genet put all his trust in Jefferson—as he had been repeatedly advised to do by his superiors—recognized in him the acknowledged chief of the republican, French party in America, based his estimates of Washington, of Hamilton and of the alleged Federalist British policy on Jefferson's eager revelations, and took his cue from the Secretary's personal anonymous behavior, from his "confident language" as opposed to his "official language" in matters of State.

Later on Genet was to know better. He was to understand the unreliability of this man who was "weak enough to sign what he does not mean and to defend officially measures which he condemns in his conversations and in his anonymous writings." He was to remember that he had "noticed in [Jefferson's] official declarations a sort of restraint" which had finally "convinced me that this man of vacillating character wanted to maintain himself in a position which would enable him to preserve his place whatever the turn of events."

But in the beginning, "initiated by you"—one quotes again from Genet's remarkable letter to Jefferson—"initiated by you in all the weaknesses and secrets of your Cabinet, in the political divisions of your country; seeing mine in danger, urged by [the French Government] every day to act

with the greatest vigor; assailed with vulgar insults in all the governmental gazettes; obliged to shun what are called the first circles of Philadelphia society which were paying the vilest homage to the other Ministers and to the agents [Noailles and his associates] of the pretended [French royalist] Regent; there was nothing left for me to do but to rely on you who appeared so well disposed, on the people which appeared so enthusiastic, and to derive all the advantage possible from my position, not as a traitor and a cheat, but with good faith and courage. This I did." And it was "you," also, who "confessed to me that unfortunately that excellent man [Washington] was ensnared by the English and by the aristocrats; that you were the only one in the Cabinet who still cared for France, but that your voice was entirely powerless; that the people was nevertheless for us, *that your friends would have a majority in the next Congress.*"

These insinuations, these declarations, these assurances given secretly by the American Secretary of State to the French Minister must never be forgotten, for it was by their light, whatever else Jefferson might be pleased to sign officially, that Genet was to illuminate his whole diplomatic conduct. That the recapitulation of them in Genet's letter to Jefferson—and of many other transactions which will find their proper place in these pages—was never made public was due to Genet's generosity, and to urgent pressure brought to bear upon him by republican politicians and Clinton relatives-in-law, at a time when its appearance in the Federalist press would probably have ruined Jefferson's forthcoming presidential election of 1800. For that campaign was won in New York State—through the efforts of Aaron Burr in the local elections of New York City—and

"it was represented to [Genet] by a leading Republican that [publication] would ruin Mr. Jefferson's election and with it many of [Genet's] own personal friends and connections of his wife who were interested in it," and he therefore "once more condemned himself to silence."

So that one does not need to confine oneself to Genet's own bitter recollection and appraisal of his intimate and fatal association with Jefferson. An intimacy of long, private talks, at the State Department and out under the trees on Dr. Logan's lawn at Stenton; an association to which Genet brought the most complete frankness with regard to his official aims for Louisiana and Canada, and heard from his friend's lips the most confiding reports of the iniquities of the Cabinet of which he was a member. The perfidy of the Secretary of State is only too well corroborated by the anxiety of men who were his own supporters, who were working to secure the presidency for him, and who saw in Genet's résumé a damning exposure of their candidate.

For in that later day Genet understood, at last, that Izard had been right; that he had fallen into the snares of Jefferson; that he had simply been used as a pawn in the Jeffersonian game with Hamilton; and that when—in the words of Moreau de Saint Méry—he had come within six weeks of "putting everything on fire" and forcing the President to summon Congress for the purpose of declaring war on England, by spurring on Jefferson's own republican French partisans to a violence against the Federal Government which Jefferson himself no longer dared to countenance—that then he had been sacrificed by his friendly, philosophical guide, as easily as one flips a June bug out of the window.

For "then, Sir, that sentiment so common to philosophers, fear, took hold of your soul." But in those other May and June days of 1793 Genet did not understand all that.

6

And the city of Philadelphia was not yet done with celebrating. For when they have marched and shouted men must eat and drink. "I live here in the midst of perpetual festivals," Genet reported. The "soporifics of toasts and civic banquets," he afterwards called them; part of the flimflam organized, as he came to believe, to lure him into a sense of popularity and false success. But at the time he went to them gaily, at any rate dutifully, enough, although he refused to attend the dinner of the Pennsylvania Society of the Cincinnati because Noailles and several French officers "who have . . . abandoned the glorious cause of liberty" were to be there. And "a few years before," Charles Biddle observed a little rashly, "he would have thought it a great honor to be at a table with the Count, such an honor as he never had an idea of."

A tremendous dinner, first, of a hundred covers at Oeller's Tavern, given by the French citizens of the town on May 18; something to warm the cockles after the chilliness of the President's welcome. A magnificent affair presided over by Ternant, served at a table decorated with French and American flags, with a Liberty Tree and Cap as centerpiece. And Citizen Duponceau read an ode written by Citizen Pichon; and Genet's secretary, Bournonville, sang the *Marseillaise* with "a great deal of soul and fire," and in particular the two extra verses composed by Genet for the French navy; and some sailors from the *Embuscade* came stamping

in, and Genet himself was persuaded to sing some republican stanzas for them.

> "Liberty! Liberty! Be thy name adored forever;
> Tyrants beware, your tottering thrones must fall.
> One interest links the free together,
> And Freedom's sons are Frenchmen all."

Fraternal Hugs, and bumpers, and toasts. Fourteen toasts—including "The virtuous Washington," "An arm of Hercules for those who have to fight the Hydra of Despotism" and "May all heads find themselves one day united under the same Bonnet, that of Liberty"—and with that "Citizen Genet placed the Liberty Cap on his head, and then passed it to all the bystanders who imitated him." They gave it to the sailors, finally, to carry away with the flags, and then they escorted Genet back to the City Tavern with acclamations, "in the midst of an immense concourse of citizens of all ages." A "thousand repeated huzzas!" A noisy evening, and some drunken parades all through those weeks, boiling down the streets to terrify the Federalists, and yelling at Washington to take his neutrality and put it where it would do the most good.

And on June 1, another dinner, the American citizens of Philadelphia. Three tables at Oeller's, this time, and two hundred covers at four dollars a plate. A dinner for which most of the toasts, so Genet was informed, had been composed by Jefferson, "but at which neither you [Jefferson] nor any member of the Federal Government condescended to be present." Fifteen toasts with salvos of artillery. "May the trumpet of liberty sounded by France arouse all the nations from a shameful sleep, and may tyrants be annihilated by its terrible blasts"—"May the United States never have

any other political system but their own, and may foreigners never mount the throne of liberty"—"May republican simplicity be the sole ornament of the Magistrate of any elective government"—that one, certainly, sounded like Jefferson, with his eye cocked at Washington. And the Liberty Bonnet was again at the head of the table, and Genet sang the *Marseillaise,* and everybody joined hands and chanted—

"Rejoice ye patriot sons
With festive mirth and glee,
Let all join hands around
The Cap of Liberty,
And in full chorus join the song,
May France ne'er want a Washington."

"Many patriotic songs," Biddle recorded. "Some of them truly ridiculous," but "they served . . . to increase our mirth."

And a few days later, aboard the *Embuscade,* a naval dinner with drills, and speeches from the crew, and broadsides with the toasts, and a firing of twenty-one gun salutes for the Minister Plenipotentiary by all the French vessels in the port. And among the guests, Governor Mifflin, Jefferson, Knox and William Bingham. And after the dinner "patriotic hymns . . . sung with the liveliest sensibility"—and one can imagine the gusto with which Knox and Bingham, those worthy Federalists, must have intoned patriotic hymns aboard the republican French frigate.

Broadsides and toasts, bonnets and bumpers—July 4, July 14, August 10, civic feasts, military banquets, Philadelphia, New York and Boston—it was a magnificent epoch for the tavern keepers.

CHAPTER II

SOME DOCUMENTS

1

THE letters came pouring in—employment, charity, domestic matters, lost children, refugees, official affairs, complaints, suggestions, compliments—masses of correspondence to be copied, and translated, and answered by the secretaries after Genet had passed on it. A furious industry. One can only glance at some of it, unchronologically. At the substance, rather than the sum of it.

Denunciations. Citizen Oster, of the consulate at Norfolk, should be removed. "We have never seen him wear, but we have seen him scorn the national cockade . . . this conduct aroused comment from many French captains, to see him go aboard their ships without a cockade." Citizen Oster was an aristocrat. In one instance he had not replied properly to the consular honors accorded to him by a French crew, but "would you believe it . . . Mr. Oster . . . began to cry *oura, oura, oura.* Then [the Captain] began to shout like a madman 'What are we here, sir? Are we French or English? Be so kind as to reply to the honors . . . or else you will neither go ashore nor aboard.' Their intention was to sink the skiff if he did not answer properly." And Citi-

zen Beauvartet, of the consulate at Philadelphia, should also be removed "for having always professed, and still professing, principles opposed to the glorious Revolution which must for ever be the object of idolatry for all good Frenchmen, just as it causes the despair of their enemies." And at Boston they were never through with their complicated bickerings.

Inventors. Mr. Chambers had a "secret" and when "this method shall become publicly known the common practice of arms will be but mere squibbing to it." It was a gun that "shoots a bullet at every shot and with force and execution equal to any musket," and would take twenty-five loads "if necessary," prepared "for intervals from one to four or five seconds." And Mr. Shadforth had the "plan of a machine that will win a battle," if "introduced on a level country, amidst the smoke of cannon." You supposed a breastwork of plank "to above the height of a man on horseback," stuffed with wool so as to be musket proof, to be placed on wheels, "the after part supported on the shoulders of horses and pushed forward by their breasts." The whole to "cover them as musket proof, the front . . . furnished with pikes. . . . It will be so unexpected an attack upon the enemy that they will not be able to repel it."

And Mr. Shindle, Mr. Conrad Shindle, who wanted "fifty dolors" because he could not "live from nothing." And the Citizen Minister would recall that he had offered to pay Mr. Shindle's passage to France in return for certain services, "but the disappointment of [the ship's] being detained put it more loss to me than . . . in the brig *Hector* when I was put on shore by the damd aristocrats and was opblight to care my trunk on my head wich was disagreable you must

think." And again "I have troublt you with a letter . . . Peoble of the city now laughs at me and say what have you got for loosing all summer and waiting upon Citizen Genet, this is what you got by it, you have spent what litle you hat now you are not eable to buy a few boxes of tin to set your trate a going, this is all you got by it. I hope, Sir, you will . . . sent . . . what your janorosety will alow so that I can work at my buisnis if you do not mean to employ me." Which the Citizen Minister had no intention of doing.

So much to attend to, all day long. The Commissioners Extraordinary from Guadeloupe who wanted American arms with which to fight the English; only General Knox said that he would be hanged if he were to give them so much as a pistol. The French departments that needed provisions, and a whole plan of purchase and finance to be arranged for, but the hatred of the English merchants "imposes on us the necessity of covering our purchases and our deliveries with the veils of mystery." The Philadelphia French Society of the Friends of Liberty and Equality who came looking for a new constitution.

2

And almost immediately in the midst of the neutrality, "to the honor of the American people," as Genet was afterwards to remind Jefferson, "a sudden commotion seemed to have struck all virtuous men, minds were electrified, all the gazettes . . . swarmed with articles each stronger than the others in support of our cause, the people of its own volition constituted itself France's general advocate . . . and . . . as if by magic from one end of the continent to the other the Democratic Societies were formed."

At Philadelphia first, where within ten days of his arrival a committee of prominent citizens came to ask Genet to choose a name for their new club. An association based on the Jacobin Clubs of France, formed for "the promotion of real and genuine republicanism, unsullied and uncontaminated with the smallest spark of monarchical or aristocratic principle," and which they were proposing to call the Sons of Liberty. But Genet suggested the term Democratic Club. And took a look at their constitution, drafted by Alexander Dallas, the Secretary of State of the Commonwealth.

And so on May 30 it seemed that the events of the American and French revolutions had taught them, "no longer dazzled by adventitious splendor or awed by antiquated usurpation, to erect the temple of Liberty on the ruins of palaces and thrones." But now "the seeds of luxury appear to have taken root in our domestic soil; and the jealous eye of patriotism already regards the spirit of freedom and equality as eclipsed by the pride of wealth and the arrogance of power." With a view, therefore, "to cultivate a just knowledge of rational liberty, to facilitate the enjoyment and exercise of our civil rights, and to transmit unimpaired to posterity the glorious inheritance of a free republican government, the Democratic Society of Pennsylvania is . . . established." And not only that, but the right to criticize the Government was inherent in every citizen, and "we ought to resist to the utmost of our power all attempts to alienate our affections from France and detach us from her alliance."

The idea spread all over the country. Boston adored the cause of liberty; "our wishes and prayers are frequently engaged against the Despots of the Earth;" they were per-

suaded that "the present struggles of the French People are directed to the subversion of aristocracy and despotism and to the lasting improvement and happiness of the human race." Charleston—they wrote to Genet about it, too—Charleston could not but "lament . . . the amazing want of republicanism which now forms a conspicuous trait in the characters composing the highest officers in the Federal Government." They "observed with indignation that aristocratic pride and mistaken ambition have for some time past been gaining daily ground among us." They resolved that "war is inevitable;" that "treaties solemnly made . . . ought to be inviolably adhered to and guarded from infraction at every risk;" that "the cause of France is our own;" and that "for any man . . . in private or public . . . to advocate doctrines . . . derogatory to the cause of France . . . or in support of . . . Great Britain, is a convincing manifestation of sentiments treacherous and hostile to the interest of the United States and well deserves the severest censure from all true republican citizens of America."

The Jeffersonian republican press began to boom. Freneau and Bache were attacking the proclamation of neutrality, plastering the President with abuse until he exploded in uncontrollable tempers. A great deal of idiocy was published and screamed. The salaries of government officials should be stopped; all ceremonies and titles should be abolished; the word "Mister" was an offense in republican ears and the "social and soul warming Citizen" ought to be substituted; to call a man Reverend was "not only antirepublican but absolutely blasphemous." What America needed was the "levelling principles" of the French Revolution. The Federalists frothed at the mouth, reviling these

"self created," these "demoniacal" societies, these "nurseries of sedition" with their "barefaced correspondencies and resolves," all this "mobocracy" going to meeting—although it was not all riff-raff; not in Charleston, for instance, not in Philadelphia, with the Secretary of State, the Attorney General, Rittenhouses, Biddles, all signing their names to the democratic "circulars."

Jefferson smiled, and Genet was delighted. He could stand out on the lawn at Stenton and tell them that "I would never suffer a gazette to enter my house," but he suffered them to enter his office, he read them with care and sent long extracts home. He hardly needed Jefferson's friends "who soon surrounded me"—as he was one day to inform a King of France—to advise him to act firmly against "the intrigues of the Federalist party directed by Mr. Hamilton," to urge him "openly to associate myself with the Republican party which would then have a majority in the new Congress." The American people was openly associating itself with him, it was France that would have a majority in the new Congress, and everything was magnificent. "I see with pleasure," he could write, "that my way of doing things pleases our American brothers, and I have reason to believe . . . that my mission will be fortunate from every standpoint."

3

Still, in June, "in spite of the dazzling popularity which surrounds me, I encounter innumerable obstacles. Aristocracy had put forth deep roots here."

And it was not only that the desertion to the enemy of

Dumouriez, in France, had made "a very bad impression;" Genet managed "to make it felt that the steadfastness of our troops, in spite of this new perfidy . . . should inspire more confidence than the most brilliant victories. The Americans, who have been beaten so often, appreciate this truth." But the President "interferes with my progress in a thousand ways, and obliges me secretly to urge the convocation of Congress, the majority of which, led by the most prominent figures in [America], will be decidedly in our favor."

For the President was insisting that the French privateers must leave American waters, and must not send their prizes back into American ports. And the President was ordering the arrest of American citizens caught under arms under the French flag. Genet's files were filled with American applications for service, and many of them were being honored, and when Gideon Henfield and John Singleterry were taken off the *Patriot Genet* and led to prison, Genet was furious. "The crime of which they are accused," he exclaimed, "which my mind cannot conceive and my pen reluctantly records, is serving France, defending with her children the common and glorious cause of liberty."

Aside from that, "knowing of no positive law or treaty which prohibits such conduct to Americans, and authorizing American police officers arbitrarily to seize sailors in the service of France aboard their own vessels, I ask your [Jefferson's] interference . . . to obtain the immediate release of [those men] who have acquired . . . by the act of engaging in the service of the Republic prior to any prohibition, the rights of French, if they have forfeited those of American citizens." And when Jefferson replied with

quotations from Vattel and other jurists, Genet advised him not to "punish the brave individuals of your nation who of their own free will enlist under our banners, knowing that no law of the United States gives the Government the deplorable power of checking their zeal by rigorous proceedings."

For there might be a declaration of neutrality, but the French treaties were still in force, legally, and, as Genet saw it, American citizens who could not enlist against France could most certainly do so conversely. And while the judges had held the men for trial, the jury "composed of worthy *sans culottes*" was to declare them innocent, and "they were paraded in triumph through all the streets." And Cassan at the Philadelphia consulate considered that day's work as "one of the memorable occasions of my life—the public spirit which begins to revive among the Americans pronounced itself more strongly . . . than it had done since the declaration of their independence. Not only was the idol [Washington] flouted, not only was his discomfiture the result of the debate, but they also took particular pains to humiliate him and succeeded fairly well."

And Randolph, on behalf of the Government, could only issue a manifesto in the *Federal Gazette* stating that "it must not be supposed that because . . . there was a verdict of acquittal, it is therefore lawful for [American citizens] to enter on board French privateers and commit hostilities against [England]. On the contrary, the Court . . . most explicitly and unanimously declared that such conduct is in violation of our treaty with [England] and that the treaty is not only a law . . . but by the Constitution it is the *supreme law of the land*. . . . Let it be understood

Entretient avec Mr
Hamilton le 27. Juin 1793.

Proposition de faire un nouveau
fonds de 45,000 dollars si je
~~refus~~ consens à payer les
traités ~~refus de ma part~~
discussion politique sur le
Pacte fédéral. Il pense que
nous sommes les agresseurs et
que l'amerique n'est point
obligée de remplir ses engagements
ma réponse définition des
deux especes d'agressions citation
de l'exposé des ~~motifs~~ la conduite
Il ne le connoit pas +
autre discussion sur le ~~[illegible]~~ pouvoir
ou gouvernement ~~général~~ fédéral
Il pense qu'il peut déclarer
la neutralité. Je pense
le contraire parceque déclarer
la neutralité c'est préjuger
le ~~[illegible]~~ droit +
consentement de faire un nouveau

+ insinuation qu'il ~~[illegible]~~
~~[illegible]~~ faisant un ~~nouveau~~ fonds plus
étendu ce seroit s'écarter
de l'impartialité que le
gouvernement fédéral
s'est prescrit ~~[illegible]~~ vis à vis
des puissances en guerre
et de indignation —

c'est la faute de Jefferson

de guerre ou de paix qui
appartient au Congrès

MEMORANDUM OF GENET'S INTERVIEW WITH HAMILTON

Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the Genet papers.

that this verdict does not by any means amount to a decision that it is not unlawful to enlist on board French privateers."

But if the English treaty was the supreme law of the land, so then were the prior French treaties. And that was awkward, to say the least.

4

And Hamilton was not helpful at the Treasury.

Genet, with enormous expenses to face—purchases of all sorts for the navy, for the colonies and for France, to say nothing of other enterprises—had hoped, and it was one of his principal tasks, to secure, if not a complete liquidation of the American debt to France, the totality of which was not yet officially due, at least sufficient advances with which to finance his operations.

The matter had already been under discussion by Ternant, and the Girondist Government had had reason to believe "that the Americans would lend themselves to the reimbursing of their debt in proportion to our needs," although they admitted the possibility of a refusal. The simplest way to liquidate the debt, they thought, was to have Congress convert it either into cash or government bonds, and to purchase all the necessary provisions with those funds, in America. For the American Government would cooperate, the Girondists had told Genet, in any scheme of reimbursement beyond the installments at that date strictly due, provided it could be arranged "with advantage, that is to say with profit for the United States. This advantage will be obvious if the debt is paid at Philadelphia . . . and is used on the spot to purchase American products."

And Genet moved Heaven and earth to arrive at some arrangement for collecting, in cash or in acceptances, the two million odd dollars still owing by America to France. And when the Treasury objected that advances beyond the amounts of interest due had already been made, Genet asked them to stop looking at the calendar. Go on advancing and deduct these sums from the principal, for France was in desperate need of funds. But Hamilton was not amenable, and as for liquidating the debt, "that would be departing from that impartiality which the Federal Government has prescribed for itself in its dealings with the Powers at war."

So Hamilton informed Genet, in an interview recorded by the latter in which the Secretary of the Treasury expressed the opinion that France was the aggressor and that "America is not obliged to fulfill her [treaty] obligations." Genet replied by quoting from the account of the events that had led to the war. Hamilton "is not acquainted with it. That is Jefferson's fault." Then another discussion concerning the powers of the Federal Government. Hamilton "thinks that it can declare neutrality. I think the contrary because to declare neutrality is to prejudge . . . the power of war or peace which belongs to Congress"—a good Jeffersonian doctrine scarcely calculated to soothe Hamilton.

Some advances were actually made, finally; but the proposal that provisions be purchased with drafts on the Treasury payable out of the interest due on the American debt was refused, and in December, Genet was complaining to Jefferson that "this event furnished to ill intentioned men and to the enemies of the Republic a powerful means of harming our cause by frightening merchants and ruining

our credit. . . . It is, Sir, only with pain that I recall the way in which we have been treated in the matter of the [debt] negotiations. . . . I concealed from the Federal Government none of our needs. I submitted my instructions to it. It saw in them that our Republic, in order to safeguard a part of its existence and that of its colonies, was counting on the fraternal feeling of the American nation; that consequently it suggested to the Federal Government several methods by means of which to acquit itself towards us of the obligations of gratitude, by coming to our aid in the moment of danger."

Although Hamilton pointed out that the French credit would not have been damaged if Genet had not diverted advances for Santo Domingo supplies to other legitimate but outside purposes. But the Federal Government had no additional money for Genet, and this failure of funds was to be one of his most fatal obstacles.

5

And Jefferson, in his official moods, was intensely annoying.

The Secretary of State, it began to appear to Genet, did nothing but quibble. He admitted the validity of the French treaties, and nullified them with hair splitting interpretations. He talked glibly of his own and America's affection for France, and went running around to tell the British Minister how neutral America intended to be. He abetted by his own contradictions the feebleness of the Government's foreign policy, and spent his time putting the blame for it on Hamilton's "antigallomany." He received

Genet's suggestions for new treaties and his protests concerning the existing ones, and replied with long confusing screeds on international law.

It got on Genet's nerves. "Affairs are soon settled," he informed Jefferson, "when sound principles are first laid down; let us explain our opinions as becomes republicans and not stoop to the level of the old system of politics by recurring to diplomatic subtleties. Let us be candid and open in our proceedings." Jefferson's arguments were "extremely ingenious," but "I must tell you candidly they rest on a basis I cannot admit. You answer my complaints . . . upon matters of right by mentioning the . . . opinions of the President . . . and that aegis not appearing to you sufficient, you bring forward certain aphorisms [of international law] to justify . . . infractions of positive treaties. This conduct, Sir, is not answerable to ours."

Now "instead of waiting until Congress . . . had determined whether the conflict in favor of liberty, the fate of France and of her colonies, were indifferent to America . . . impelled by I know not what influence, another line of conduct has been pursued. Difficulties and obstacles have been multiplied before me. Treaties have been interpreted unfavorably to our interest. . . . In a word, if I except my diplomatic reception, I have in [my] negotiations . . . met with nothing but disgust and obstacles." And "it is not thus that the American people wish us treated, I am sure"—Jefferson himself was always preaching that doctrine—"and I yet indulge a belief that such measures were never devised in the breast of General Washington, that illustrious Hero in the cause of liberty; I can only attribute them to foreign impressions which time and truth will efface."

And in the meantime, "since you cannot protect our commerce and our colonies . . . at least do not check the civic zeal of our citizens, do not expose them to certain ruin by obliging [French vessels] to leave your ports unarmed."

Genet was up in arms immediately against an American neutrality which ignored his treaties. Be just as neutral as you please, but American ports must be available to French privateers and prizes, for, until Congress, and Congress only, said otherwise, that was the law. And not Washington, or Jefferson, or anybody else could erase a treaty. If it got you in trouble with England, that was too bad; but the fear of English reprisals must not be allowed to deprive France of her legitimate advantages. As a matter of fact, Genet himself was of the opinion that the Government, "after coming to an agreement with me," should have "put an embargo . . . on English shipping, and threatened to have Congress pass non-importation and confiscation acts if the King of England does not respect the neutrality of the American flag and of the French colonies guaranteed by the United States."

And in the next Congress—that Congress that Genet was waiting for—Madison was to propose resolutions on merchant shipping while the Republicans roared for non-importation from England; and for a while in 1794 there was to be an embargo on all vessels except the French, the raising of which was attended with violent manifestations of popular disapproval. For if the French privateers were high-handed enough, the outrages committed upon the American flag by the British in their ports were innumerable; and Genet, for one, had no patience any longer with this neutrality which impeded France's prosecution of her

war and suffered every sort of insult at the hands of the English.

Every day, he advised Jefferson in July, he received "new complaints of the insults the English are pleased to cause the [American] flag to undergo. . . . The sovereignty of your country is violated with impunity, not by the lawful exercise of those rights granted to us by the treaties, but by the plunder . . . and the ill treatment practised by our enemies in contempt of your laws and of the symbol of your sovereignty. Upon every sea an audacious piracy pursues French property on board your vessels and even American property when it is destined for our ports. Your political rights stand for nothing. It is in vain that the principles of neutrality establish that friendly ships protect enemy property. It is in vain that the President . . . calls for the observance of this maxim. It is in vain that the desire of preserving peace makes a sacrifice of the interests of France to the interests of the moment. It is in vain that this thirst after riches triumphs over its honor in the political balance of America. All this accommodation . . . all this humility attains no end, and the too confident French are punished for having believed that the American nation had a Flag, that they had some regard for their laws, some convictions of their strength, and that they would maintain an opinion of their dignity. . . ."

Some very plain, blunt words in French, for a change. And "it is for the Americans to make known their generous indignation as to these outrages, and I ought to confine myself to demand of you . . . to acquaint me with the measures you have taken to obtain . . . restitution of the properties . . . carried off from my fellow citizens from

under the protection of your flag. It is from our Government that they learned that the Americans were our allies, that the American nation was sovereign and knew how to make itself respected. . . . But if our citizens have been deceived, if you are not in a condition to support the sovereignty of your people, speak out—We guaranteed it when we were slaves, we know how to render it formidable now we are become free."

6

A very rude letter, of course; one to justify Charles Biddle's comment that Genet was "a handsome, agreeable man, but, like most of his countrymen, of a hasty disposition," and that he "frequently wrote and said what he afterwards severely repented"—although it is to be doubted whether in the future he ever repented of anything that he had written to Jefferson. There is no doubt about it; he was extremely hot headed, excessively rash, unspeakably impertinent. With the example of the Jeffersonian press before his eyes, with the early advice of Jefferson in his ears, with his mind filled with the republican bilge with which the period had invested the literary style of public characters on both sides of the water, he permitted himself—he was more and more rashly to permit himself—grandiose verbosities of sarcasm and criticism in his correspondence with the Federal Government, verbosities which came to him only too readily; while his underlings set up a sustaining chorus which must, in some instances, have been the envy of the native Democratic Societies which, whatever the quality of their own occasional virulence, usually lacked that fine

imaginative gusto in polemic composition of their Latin brothers.

Gentlemen who, like the Consul at New York in the midst of the controversies over shipping, spoke of Jefferson as "this Minister of a day and of a Republic that owes us the light of day," who "dares to speak to men representing the most powerful nation on earth in the language of the old tyrants," and instructed the Secretary of State in person to address his complaints and "threats" henceforth to the French Minister. Or, like the Consul at Philadelphia, announced to the world that "no authority on earth has either the right or the power to interpose between the French nation and her enemies;" that "she alone is arbitress and judge of the offensive acts which . . . she is forced to commit against the despotic governments [confederated] to plunge her again into [that] slavery from which she alone has been able to free herself, although abandoned by her friends;" and that police seizure of French prizes by the courts of Pennsylvania in accordance with the President's orders was a procedure "hitherto unheard of," inaugurating what could only be a diplomatic discussion "by an arbitrary act of violence and by military execution."

They were all of them fire eaters, those French republicans—Ishmaels of Europe whose hands were against every man and every man's hand against them, until the habit of aggression was become second nature—bursting with grievances, always red behind the ears, blue in the face, running around among the powder barrels dropping lighted matches in them. Belligerent, tempestuous, hasty, not always so sure of the details of their ground. Genet was not cautious,

étoient questionables ne pourroient point cependant offrir
quelqu'expédient pour faire ce que la france desiroit.
Toutes ces infamies ont pleinement justifié au tribunal
de ma conscience le parti que j'ai pris + n'étant point rappellé (5). de rester en
~~n'étant point rappellé (5)~~ + et remis mes papiers
Amerique après avoir rendu mes comptes à mes successeurs
d'une maniere honorable et quoique peu fortuné de
m'ensevelir dans la retraite et dans le silence pour
+ recueillir des materiaux pour l'histoire
méditer sur les grandes révolutions du monde, pénétrer
les secrets attachants de la nature, et m'isoler surtout
des détestables intrigues des cours et des cabales
décourageantes des peuples.
+ rendant plus de justice à vos talents
Plut à dieu, Monsieur, que vous eussiés également consacré au
culte des sciences le reste de votre existence après avoir travaillé
à l'affermissement de l'indépendance des Etats unis. Plut à dieu que
tous les autres envoyés du gouvernement federal en eussent
fait autant. La france auroit peut être passé sans suspension
de mouvement d'un gouvernement énergique à un autre
gouvernement énergique; Le sang des bourbons banni
comme celui des Tarquins n'auroit point coulé sur les
échaffauds; Le peuple françois puissant et redoulé auroit
contenu l'Europe et trouvé des Alliés; des millions

GENET TO JEFFERSON

SAMPLE PAGE OF THE DUPLICATE LETTER OF 1797

"Would to God, Sir . . . that you also had consecrated the rest of your life to the cult of the sciences. . . ." Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the Genet papers.

not meditative, not conciliating. Bournonville realized it—he was ever the most prudent of them—and a day was coming when he was to remind Genet that they had often been obliged to "answer before having been able to make a thorough investigation of the question." But the strange part of it was that in the main, in spite of all these errors of temperament and judgment, they were right. What they said was impertinent, often idiotically expressed in the jargon of their new emancipation, but fundamentally it was correct.

There has been too much nonsense written about Genet; or rather perhaps very little written about him and almost all of it nonsense. The fluent repetition of legends. That he was a boor, that he was a fool, that he flew off the handle intellectually in America, that he behaved like a maniac. Only recently Mr. Bowers has had his fling at "the light headed and hot headed young diplomat" who "licked his chops" over the "opportunity" to decline the invitation of the Cincinnati, at the "young fanatic," at the "lunatic caperings," the "antics" of Genet, that "episode" in Jefferson's career. Sound and fury. And that other hardy perennial legend—that he threatened to appeal to the people.

It is time perhaps, once and for all, to remark that the ambassador of a nation was at his post in 1793 for the purpose of fostering the interests of his own country and not necessarily those of the country in which he was residing; that in following the instructions with which he had been provided by his Government, he was only doing his duty; and that in no particular—except in his distrust of Washington, nourished by Jefferson—can Genet be said for a moment

actually to have departed from those two basic requirements of diplomatic conduct in his day, or from a logical interpretation of the treaties which it was his special commission to enforce.

His offenses, from an American standpoint—his intrigues, his propaganda, his stirring up of warlike movements—were unavoidable from the nature of his instructions; his disputes with the Federal Government, whatever the tone of their context, were inevitable as a result of that Government's disregard of its treaties; his historic diplomatic crime, the celebrated appeal to the people, he did not commit; his principal error, his ruinous folly, was that he did not listen to Izard, that night at The Elms, and shun the private blandishments of Thomas Jefferson.

And if his pen ran away with him, it was for the reason that, in his own words, "a pure and warm blood runs swiftly through my veins; that I passionately love my country; that I adore the cause of liberty; that I am always ready to sacrifice my life for it; that to me it appears inconceivable that all the enemies of tyranny, that all virtuous men, should not march with us to the combat; and that when I find an injustice is done to my fellow citizens, that their interests are not espoused with the zeal which they merit, no consideration in the world can hinder either my pen or my tongue from tracing, from expressing my grief."

7

The disputes continued, more frequent and more acrimonious. A great deal of trouble now over the Consuls, for privateers and prizes were being seized in the ports by local

courts the jurisdiction of which the French officials would not admit, and were determined to resist.

So that Hauterive at New York announced flatly that "whereas the consulary jurisdiction is an extension of a first degree of the jurisdiction of the tribunals of commerce and of the admiralty instituted in foreign countries by the nation . . . appointing consuls"; and "whereas the French Government has recently given to the consulary authority of the Republic the jurisdiction of prizes . . . and has thus constituted it a court of admiralty;" and "whereas all interference [with] French prizes being formally prohibited to the tribunals of the country . . . whence it follows that a French prize remaining in a neutral port by virtue of treaties . . . is as much out of the reach of the powers of any local tribunal as if it were moored in a French harbor;" and whereas any deviation from this doctrine authorized by the Federal Government must suppose "that the Government has a right to interpret, modify and cancel the public political covenants which unite the two nations;" therefore "we protest against this violation."

And in the particular case in question "we formally declare that whatever may be the decision of the court which has arrogated to itself the power of trying the case . . . the parties concerned, who are subject to our tribunal alone, are not bound to conform to it. We declare the judgment, whatever it be, null and void; first because of the notorious incompetence of the tribunal; second because [the judgment] would be given in contempt of our protest; third because it will be formed on insufficient information, the principal papers . . . being in our hands where they shall remain; fourth because the French Republic being one of the

two parties, in order to proceed regularly it would be necessary for the judges to find in the American laws that the French nation is amenable to a private tribunal . . . and can be condemned by default."

It was a point of view which on occasion enlivened the water-fronts of the American seaports with partisan uproar, already sufficiently inflamed by the activities of the French frigates. For at Boston, in August, the *Concorde* was incredibly exhibiting a banner at her masthead "proscribing" eleven prominent citizens as "aristocrats" and enemies of France; and in a seething of civic indignation hardly soothed by immediate official apologies the Federalists were amazed, as well they might be, at this outburst of Jacobinism, while the republican press still bellowed its praise of the navy that had "thundered the music" of Cornwallis's defeat.

And at Philadelphia, "for several days previous to the [*Embuscade's*] departure," so the British Consul informed his Government, "the town was in one continuous scene of riot; the French seamen ranged the streets by night and by day, armed with cutlasses, and committed the most daring outrages whenever they met any of our seamen . . . [and] wounded and abused them, and even took some on board the frigate where they were detained." And while allowing for the reported "confusion and inefficiency of the police," one is not to suppose that His British Majesty's jacktars were twiddling their thumbs.

And now at New York, in the last days of July—after her sailors had again stamped up and down the streets for some time in a state of further riotous association with such of their English colleagues as were present in the port—the *Embuscade,* with Bompard in a liberty cap and striped

pants, sailed out beyond Sandy Hook to engage the British *Boston* in a combat witnessed by hundreds of spectators on the Jersey shore.

Captain Courtney of the *Boston* had come down especially from Halifax to send Bompard a "cartel," a copy of which was posted up at the Tontine Coffee House where the big red bonnet with crimson "torsels" hung on the wall, and instantly in the town "excitement runs high and the authorities are in a stupor." The "greatest agitation" prevailed, and "an increasing fermentation" testified to the republican sympathies of the citizens of New York. And four days later, preceded by the French squadron just arrived from the Chesapeake, and escorted by convoys of vociferous river boats, the *Embuscade* returned with news of her victory. For Courtney had been killed, the *Boston's* maintopmast had been shot away, and she had fled and escaped from the chase after firing assortments of rusty nails and broken glass into the Frenchman's sails. And actually, according to Charles Biddle, the *Embuscade* had received so much damage from her smaller opponent that she was out of commission. But New York, already waiting to receive the officers of the French fleet and conduct them to George Clinton's punch-bowls at Government House, went delirious with celebration.

Rabbles and rum, guns and bells, bonnets and bumpers —they were all at it again, staggering triumphantly from tavern to tavern, "hugging and tugging . . . addressing and caressing." And—

> "As the Frenchman shot past, *Boston* gave him a blast,
> Glass bottles, case knives and old nails;

Having got these discharged they bore away large,
While the Frenchman pursued as they fled.
But vain was his haste, and vain was his speed,
He ended the fray in a chase.
The Gaul had the best of the fight, 'tis agreed,
The *Boston* the best of the race."

8

And in Boston, Consul Duplaine was in trouble, and his *exequatur* revoked, for having "with an armed force [from the *Concorde*] opposed the course of the laws of the land, and rescued out of the hands of an officer of justice a vessel [a prize previously seized by the frigate] which he had arrested [in order to return her to her owners] by authority . . . from his court."

Another conflict between the judiciary and consular authorities over the status of French prizes. And while Citizen Nancrède, a professor of French at Harvard, who was having a private business feud with Duplaine, was to brand the Consul as a violent and indiscreet *sans culotte* with whom it was "indecent" to be seen, still he was glad to report to Genet that his, Genet's, anonymous published letter in defense of Duplaine "does wonders, Citizen. With what force . . . you master the pride of these people! It is impossible to give the jurors better arguments. The Attorney General . . . tried to prevent the publication. Duplaine will be acquitted; since the letter has been read everyone is ashamed that the French Consul was arrested." And three times, Genet was able to remind Jefferson, the Attorney General at Boston tried to prosecute Duplaine, and "three times a virtuous jury of the people rejected those attempts,

and [Duplaine] was acquitted in the most honorable manner." Henfield and Duplaine—it was a terrible smack for the Federal Government.

And as for Duplaine's dismissal, Genet did not admit the "validity" of it, because it was an "arbitrary" act on the part of the President, without state of war and without due process of law. Let the Massachusetts courts speak if Duplaine had broken any law. And his triple acquittal was the answer to that. And "I do not remember what the dusty writings of Grotius, of Vattel, of Puffendorf . . . say on this subject. I have forgotten, thank God, what those authors subsidized by tyrants wrote concerning the rights of nations at a time when they were all in chains; but the fundamental bases of your liberty and of ours are engraved upon my memory . . . the rights of man are enshrined in my heart . . . I have constantly before my eyes your Constitution and ours, and it is because I am imbued with the just and wise intentions of those who dictated them that I ask you . . . to have [Duplaine's] conduct investigated by the Legislature of Massachusetts."

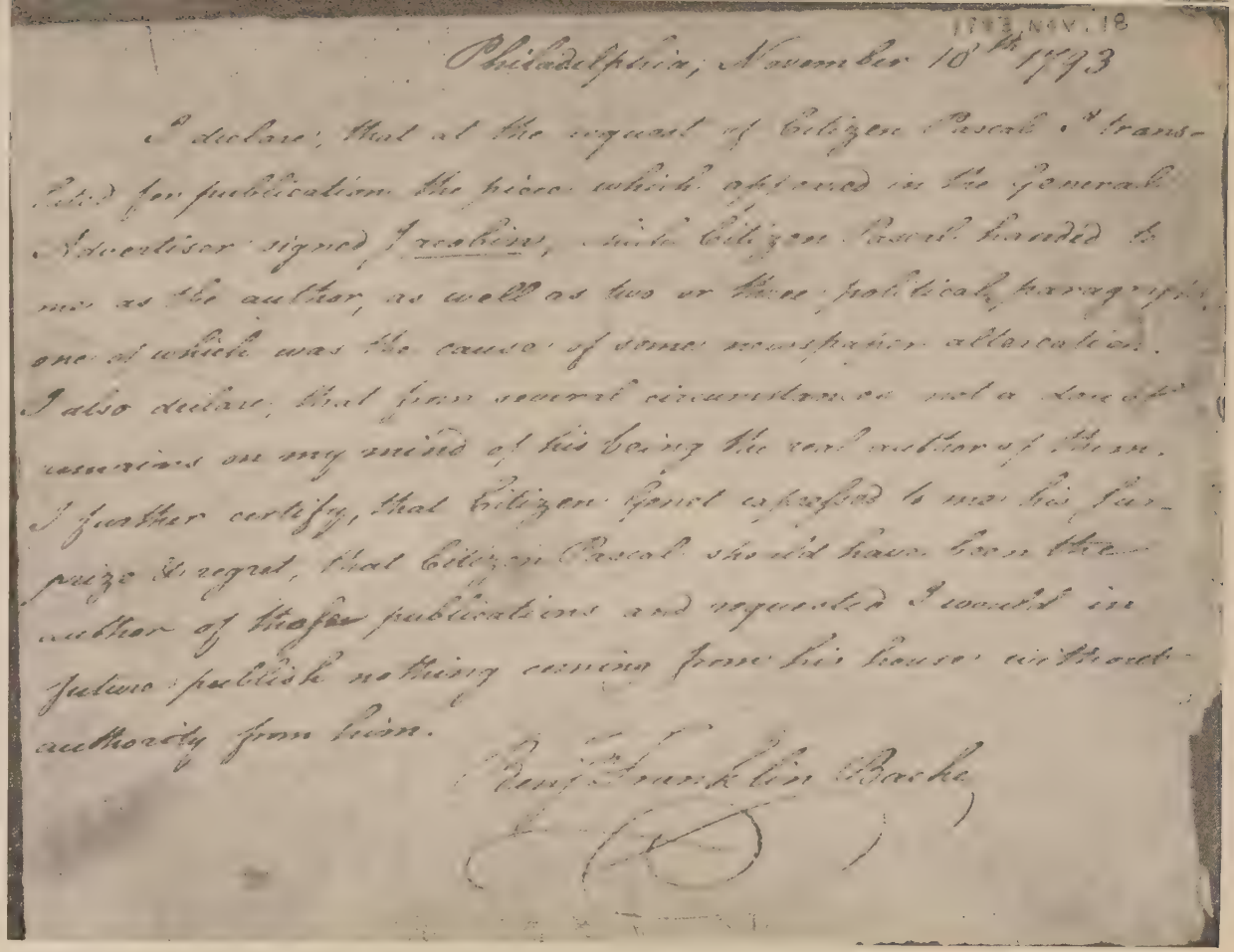
Sound and fury. Genet was not a fool. It was not within his power, he elsewhere notified Jefferson, "by virtue of our treaties, by virtue of my most precise instructions," to order French privateers to restore their prizes, but he had long since ordered his Consuls to "oppose no resistance . . . to the moral force of the judiciary of the United States if it believes itself empowered to interfere in matters relating to prizes, or to the [force] of the Government if it persists in the policy against which I have never ceased to make the most justified protests." One suspects that he would gladly have seen Duplaine at the bottom of the sea; but he never

abandoned his underlings, he fought for them tooth and nail, as long as there was an official leg to stand on.

And Duplaine himself was loudly demanding another trial which no one seemed able to arrange for him, with all Boston in an uproar and the factions reviling each other, Duplaine, his successor and everybody concerned, in the gazettes; while the hornets' nest sang around the Government's head and Nancrède wrote his denunciations, until Genet told him to be done with his "negative" attitude towards the French officials, with his "acid repetitions" and his "continual sourness." And in any case, the "little war" at Boston had ceased to be "interesting."

And at Baltimore, Moissonnier, who had been sent to that consulate, was in trouble for having shown too much zeal in arranging for the safety of the French convoy in the Chesapeake. He had exhibited "a little heat" trying to persuade the Governor of Maryland to put the forts of Baltimore in a state of defense—Genet had told him to do that—but the Citizen Minister did not see how these precautions taken for the security of the anchorage could in any way compromise the peace of the United States.

And "God grant that you may long enjoy it with honor, that peace so sweet and so happy . . . but I will not conceal from you [Jefferson] today, any more than in the past, that it is not the most certain object of my hopes. . . . I am too well initiated in the mysteries of [European] cabinets not to tremble at the fate which threatens America if the cause of liberty does not triumph everywhere that there is a throne. I assure you that you have an enemy. All the Princes consider you [Americans] as our teachers; almost all of them see in you still only rebels who must sooner or later be



1793 NOV. 18

Philadelphia, November 18th 1793

I declare, that at the request of Citizen Pascal I translated for publication the piece which appeared in the General Advertiser signed Jacobin, which Citizen Pascal handed to me as the author, as well as two or three political paragraphs, one of which was the cause of some newspaper altercation. I also declare, that from several circumstances not a doubt remains on my mind of his being the real author of them. I further certify, that Citizen Genet expressed to me his surprize & regret, that Citizen Pascal should have been the author of those publications and requested I would in future publish nothing coming from his house without authority from him.

Benj. Franklin Bache

AFFIDAVIT OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN BACHE

EDITOR OF THE PHILADELPHIA *Aurora*

Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the possession of the Library of Congress.

punished. Almost all of them have sworn your ruin as well as ours, and rest assured that George III only joined their league at that price. Your . . . conciliations will not change this system, and if the Ministers who reside here tell you differently it is only the better to deceive you. They delight in the security in which they plunge you at the moment when their Courts are insulting you everywhere except along your coasts, where they know that we have forces; but their tone will change whereas ours will always remain the same, true and sincere."

The world goes around, and the beguilements of diplomacy do not change.

9

When they were not arguing about the prizes, it was the privateers themselves. The President had ordered them out of American waters, and nervous Governors were doing their best to seize them when they demurred, but still in the early summer of 1793 the ports were swarming with them. The original Charleston privateers—Stephen Girard had lost a ship to the *Sans Culotte*—and new ones all the time, the *Roland,* the *Carmagnole,* the *Vainqueur de la Bastille,* the *Old Whig;* sloops and brigs captured or purchased, refitted more or less surreptitiously, sent out with guns and letters of marque. One of these, the *Little Sarah* at Philadelphia, soon to change her name and make history.

A great palavering about the definition of the "extent of the line of territorial protection on the coasts of the United States." And only in November did Jefferson settle it at "one sea league or three geographical miles from the sea shores," which was the smallest distance claimed by "any

respectable assent among the nations," as representing "the utmost range of a cannon ball." And Genet accepted the ruling "provisionally," and observed that "if this line, Sir, had been decided upon sooner we would have avoided a lot of writing, of debates and proceedings."

As for the whole question of privateers, Genet saw "with pain," in June, that the President "persists"—and that was not a nice word to use—"persists in the opinion that a nation at war has not a right to give commissions to . . . their vessels . . . in the ports of a neutral Power. . . . I confess, Sir, that that opinion appears to me contrary to the principles of natural rights, the usages of nations, the bonds that unite us, and even the President's proclamation. The right of arming . . . can, in my opinion, be exercised by a nation at war in a neutral country unless by treaties, or the express laws of that country, that right be confined to one friendly or allied nation to the express exclusion of others; and this appears to me our situation exactly. The United States, friends and allies of the French nation, warrant the safety of their possessions in America, permit them to enter armed and remain in their ports, to carry their prizes there, to refit and equip, and at the same time expressly deny these advantages to their enemies. The intention of the United States has been to facilitate to us the means of effectually protecting our commerce and defending our possessions in America."

That was obviously the sense of the treaties which only Congress could annul. For "if our merchant vessels . . . had not the liberty of arming at a time when the French are alone resisting the league of tyrants against the freedom of nations, they would be exposed to inevitable ruin when

leaving the ports of the Union, which is certainly not the intention of the People of the United States. The expressions of their brotherly affection have resounded from all quarters around me, and their sentiments are by no means equivocal. They are pure as the hearts of those who have expressed them, and in proportion as they have made upon me a forcible impression . . . so much the more ardently do I wish, Sir, to see the Federal Government observing, as much as in them lies, the public engagements which the two people have contracted; and that by their generous and prudent line of conduct they may give the world an example of a real neutrality, which does not consist in basely abandoning friends in a moment of danger, but in adhering strictly, if nothing more can be done, to the terms of solemn treaties."

A very long sentence, but perfectly clear and just, surely. For "it is by such a line of conduct that a nation renders itself respected by other Powers, preserves the esteem of its friends and deserves to increase the number of them."

One wonders, sometimes, if it was not the solid, inescapable veracity of some of Genet's communications to the State Department which rendered them frequently so disagreeable.

10

It was all very trying, very wearying, very perplexing, while the flies buzzed in the fearful heat—the "intemperate and unremitting" heat and humidity. Out at Mainville, at his Uncle Toto's, his father had once made a sort of muslin fly screen for his grandmother Cardon in her invalid's chair. Mainville. *Charming Gabrielle.* Now at Philadelphia so great a labor, and the candles burning late into the June nights. So much work, day after day, and "in the mean-

time," since that was not enough, "I provision the Antilles, I excite the Canadians to free themselves from the yoke of England, I arm the Kentuckians, and I prepare a naval expedition which will second their descent upon New Orleans. . . ."

CHAPTER III

FLORA AND FLORIDA

1

"I EXCITE the Canadians . . . I arm the Kentuckians . . . I prepare a naval expedition [against] New Orleans."

In Paris, when they read that, they thought that he was crazy. "I pass over," a new Minister of Foreign Affairs sat down to write to Genet, "the measures which you imagine that you have taken . . . to arm the Kentuckians and the Canadians who live more than two hundred leagues away from your residence. . . . No more can I conceive how you can have been able to organize an expedition by sea against New Orleans." And that new Minister wrote a great many other very disagreeable sentences which must, in their proper place, be examined.

Certainly, they thought, or they pretended to think, that he was crazy—these new men at the desks in Paris. The Twelve, who were the Nine, of the New Committee of Public Safety. The Nine who were supposed to be the One, Robespierre the Incorruptible. For something had happened in Paris. Genet was not to know it for many weeks, but the Girondists had fallen. It had happened suddenly, on June 2, but actually for some time the shadow upon them

of the "Mountain" had been deepening. The failure of their prosecution of Marat and Robespierre had been the twilight of their day; and they had already themselves, of their own accord, taken the first steps into the night that was to lead them to proscription and to the scaffold, when, in April, they had abolished the inviolability of deputies—for when the mob came from the *Commune* demanding the surrender of all the leading Girondists, the Convention, which lacked the courage, did not possess the right either to refuse.

Now the *Commune* ruled in Paris, the "Mountain" was triumphant, the whole retinue of the Terror was in the chairs. Saint-Just, Couthon, Billaud-Varenne—all the terrible names, and with them Robespierre whose own personal reputation for terrorism was a myth endured, it may be, in order to nourish the vanity that affected to lead an idolizing populace wherever it chose to push. Until it pushed him down the Rue Saint Honoré, and up the fatal stairs, and onto the block under the falling knife that ran so smoothly, then, in its grooves. That day will come, with its preceding night of intrigues and ambitions—for the present it will be well always to remember that the Girondists were done, Brissot, and Roland, and all the friends of 1792; that their most furious enemies stood in their shoes, and that Genet was far away, busy with his Girondist instructions, ignorant of these matters.

2

Canada, Louisiana—the great Girondist enterprise from which had come the most important sections of Genet's "difficult" instructions, "almost without precedent in diplomacy" as he was to tell a King of France. They had talked so much

about it during the last weeks in Paris, at those little Girondist gatherings at Brissot's, at Roland's, at Lebrun's. Some of them had talked of almost nothing else; Thomas Paine, Joel Barlow of the Scioto Land Company, Stephen Sayre who had served under Arthur Lee and Franklin in France, Mary Wollstonecraft's Gilbert Imlay, veteran of the American Revolution and soldier of fortune—the Americans of that first Parisian "colony"—Beaupoil the soldier, Lyonnet the merchant from New Orleans, and the persistent Miranda himself. One of the generals who had driven away in the hack with Genet from that "incongruous party" at Dumouriez's. The Venezuelan who had fought with the French in America; who, according to John Adams, "knew more of the families, parties and connections in the United States than any other man in them," and whose "constant topic was the independence of South America, her immense wealth . . . and disposition to throw off the dominion of Spain."

A general of brigade with Dumouriez, they had tried later to implicate him in the latter's desertion and had imprisoned him in May, 1793; but during those winter days of Genet's last months in Paris he had been very prominent in Girondist circles with his dreams for emancipating Spanish America, and Dumouriez had advised Lebrun to interest the United States "in executing [the] superb project of General Miranda." And Colonel Smith, John Adams's son-in-law, was there too, in November, talking hopefully to the Girondists about the American debt, and hearing all that there was to hear about the French schemes for Louisiana and the Floridas. Schemes which he made clear to Jefferson already in February of 1793.

Genet had met them all, he had heard them talk, he may even still have been there in time to read the American proposals for the liberation of Louisiana submitted by George Rogers Clark and his friend O'Fallon. The Americans were very optimistic, it was like rolling off a log to arouse the American Southwest for a descent upon the Spanish possessions. Any day in the week one had only to whistle in that part of America in order to assemble an expedition, as long as it was destined to attack Spain and open up the Mississippi. "Leave the matter entirely in [Genet's] hands," Imlay had advised, "for it would be very easy to find men in the settlements of the Western country who would undertake this expedition at their own risk and expense if they were assured of help from the Colonists and from the French Republic."

And Robespierre's, or Danton's Foreign Minister—Lebrun had been arrested on June 2, kept at his post under guard until June 21, and then replaced—the new Deforgues was simply being silly when he pretended not to understand how it could be done. His archives were filled with memorials from the Americans, from Beaupoil, from Lyonnet, telling him how very easily it could be done. There ought to be a committee, one of them thought, to "exist in America and act only under the orders of the French Minister." Beaupoil would be a good man, for he "has courage, strong resolution, knows the country and will be splendid for attacking." And Lyonnet who seemed "of a peaceable nature but will be of use through his local knowledge." Sayre, too, "very useful, provided he is well supervised," a very active man with "a fertile mind for ways and means." And Joel Barlow, "a real friend of liberty, philosopher, pure

in his habits." One might entrust to him under Genet the general direction of affairs and the handling of funds. Such a committee should proceed at once to America—it was then March, 1793—and "prepare the uprising of the Spanish colonies which Miranda could complete." And if matters were settled with "the Mexican who has written," the Four should "hear him and arrange everything with him."

And Lyonnet had told the Government that it would be "superfluous to send very many people to America, since the expedition is to be prepared on the Ohio." It would be sufficient to send six reliable persons, capable of playing six different roles, who would confer with Genet and his agents. They must pretend to be buying lands in the West, and supplies for their settlement, in order to satisfy the requirements of neutrality. Keep everything very secret, and cooperate with General Clark in Kentucky, for "his name alone is worth hosts." Of course it would be necessary to "spend a great deal for liquor, because the Americans hardly ever talk business except in front of a bowl."

No—they were a lot of fine, two fisted, hollow legged topers in those days, the Americans.

3

"I excite the Canadians . . . I arm the Kentuckians . . . I prepare a naval expedition [against] New Orleans."

Genet was doing just that, with the full knowledge of Thomas Jefferson. Down in the South they had been only too glad to cooperate. The Spanish outrages, their continual fomenting of attacks by the Indians—they were said to be paying the savages for every American scalp—the

blocking of the Mississippi, all these matters had become unbearable throughout the Southwest. An expedition against the Floridas from Georgia? In conjunction with an attack on Louisiana from Kentucky? Supported by a French fleet? Fine. Governor Moultrie, at Charleston, was all in favor and did everything he could to help Genet and afterwards Mangourit—Michael Angelo Mangourit, the Consul—in whose hands Genet left the Florida end of the enterprise. Only a few days after Genet's departure, Mangourit had been conferring with the Governor, "the venerable friend," reminding him that "on our side the weakening of the enemy was our only profit," and receiving from him letters of introduction to useful persons in Georgia. And "I did not hide from him at all the real nature of the motives that take me to Savannah."

And at Philadelphia, by the middle of June, war with Spain was an accepted event. The President was calling on Knox for reports of the Spanish strength in the Floridas, Jefferson was writing to Monroe and others that hostilities were inevitable. And Jefferson, who already knew something of it from Colonel Smith, was soon hearing all about the French scheme from Genet.

It was to be very curious, Jefferson's repeated association with such schemes, one of the most interesting aspects of his excessively curious diplomacy. For in 1805 —after an attempt in 1798, seconded by Hamilton, to interest President Adams in a British movement against the Spanish possessions—Miranda was to come to America, hold conferences with President Jefferson and Madison, report that the Government had not said No, and then see Colonel Smith and his friends at New York tried for breach

of neutrality for having fitted out a ship against Spain—as they claimed, at the trial which acquitted them, with the complete consent of the Government. A notable trial in which the defense subpœnaed almost every officer of Government including Madison, only to have their presence forbidden by the President.

And in 1806—with war with Spain again confidently anticipated in the midst of President Jefferson's acrobatic negotiations—Aaron Burr was to come to Washington, hold a long conference with the President—only he did not pick his teeth like Miranda—and depart upon his Mexican adventure claiming in many quarters to have the President's assent, only to see himself ridiculously accused, and acquitted, of treason. Another notable trial in which the defense twice subpœnaed the President of the United States and left him at the end still in very agitated contempt of court.

It seemed as though Thomas Jefferson must always be dabbling clandestinely in enterprises against Spain, encouraging people to proceed, if only by not discouraging them—sometimes, apparently, for the purpose of influencing diplomatic negotiations of his own—and then stepping out of the transaction when the moment appeared good to him. One of the "whimsicals," John Randolph thought, men who "advocated . . . measures . . . until they were nearly ripe for execution, when they hung back, condemned the step after it was taken, and on most occasions affected a glorious neutrality." Or as Andrew Jackson saw him, a man, who, if anything occurred to alarm him, would "run like a cotton tail rabbit."

And Jefferson dabbled in 1793 with Genet. The Citi-

zen Minister had found reports and interviews awaiting him at Philadelphia. Citizen De Pauw, a merchant of Kentucky recently returned from New Orleans, had interesting things to say about the Creole city. They were parading about down there, singing the *Marseillaise* under Governor Carondelet's windows, driving that official to the construction of forts and palisades because he was convinced that the arrival of only four French frigates would set his *Vieux Carré* to dancing the *Carmagnole.* And when they were not parading they were meeting in secret to discuss liberty and liberation. There had been a dinner in April at which plans had been formulated for a descent upon the city from Kentucky. And De Pauw was no less aware than Carondelet of the inadequacy of the Spanish Mississippi posts to resist such an attempt. All that was necessary was a French fleet and a thousand or so Kentuckians. Mangourit, who had his own agents at New Orleans distributing propaganda of emancipation from some of the American Democratic Societies, said the same thing. Frigates and money.

From Kentucky, too, there was only enthusiasm. George Rogers Clark had written a long letter in February, to say that "the contest in which [France] is actually involved against almost all the despots of Europe is among the most awful, interesting and solemn . . . that has ever arisen in the world;" that "the whole human race are deeply interested in the issue of this controversy, but with those who already feel or know anything of the rights of man it is a spectacle which between hope and fear about its success must engage the attention of both head and heart and with them influence every [one] of the nobler passions;" and what about a little expedition to New Orleans? And Con-

gressman Brown, with whom Genet had been put in contact by Jefferson, was very much interested, and giving letters of introduction to a certain André Michaux to be presented to Clark and to Shelby, the Governor of Kentucky.

Now this Michaux was a botanist, that was all; a disciple of Flora, a gentleman of science. The Girondists had intended to send a botanist to America with Genet, but it had not been necessary because Michaux was already in America; conferring in January with Jefferson, receiving his instructions for a transcontinental voyage of exploration on behalf of the American Philosophical Society. And Michaux had travelled around the country, and his scientific observations were so valuable—some of them are to be found in the Genet papers—that Genet was sending him back to Kentucky with some more instructions. Instructions that had to do, not with the raising of flowers, but of men.

4

Jefferson knew all that. Genet had told him everything; he had come to him "not as Secretary of State but as Mr. Jefferson," and explained the whole project in the Southwest, read him the proposed addresses to the Canadians and Louisianians. And it was Jefferson's understanding that the expedition was to assemble beyond the territorial limits of the United States—and that was quite all right—and that Louisiana was to be set up as an independent State. Just as in Burr's day the same thing was to have been done for Mexico. And just as in Burr's time the Jeffersonian accusations of Western separation could not be substantiated, so with regard to Genet's the allegations of ulterior French

motives seem to remain assumptions. The Girondists had abjured conquest in America, and the Girondists were honest souls. The Talleyrand policy of a revived French colonial empire had not yet come into effect.

Canada was to join the "American constellation;" Louisiana was to be emancipated from Spain; in Florida, Mangourit was to announce that "the French abhor conquest; with their help you will be independent provided that you remain republican until death. As the price of these benefits, [the French] ask of you only an eternal alliance. . . . As long as the war lasts, the French Republic will retain possession of the Floridas [in order to make use of ports unencumbered with American neutrality]; but at the peace [France] will release them to the sovereign will of their inhabitants, to an independence guaranteed and upheld by France." Of course one can maintain, if one will, that the French were all liars. Perhaps they were. That Genet's instructions were a blind to cover up the intended conquest of all British and Spanish America. One can maintain anything when a foreign Minister is to be discredited.

As for American neutrality, "I [Jefferson] told him that his enticing officers and soldiers from Kentucky to go against Spain was really putting a halter about their necks, for that they would assuredly be hung if they commenced hostilities against a nation at peace with the United States." But Jefferson knew that they were so to be enticed and he did nothing to prevent it. He had put himself on record, he had crossed his fingers, and "leaving out that article I did not care what insurrections might be excited in Louisiana." The more the merrier.

And Jefferson did better than that; for on June 28 he

had written a letter of introduction for Michaux to Governor Shelby presenting him as a scientific gentleman, and now at Genet's request in July, without changing the date, Jefferson changed the letter to include the fact that Michaux possessed Genet's good opinion, so that on that basis too he was worthy of Shelby's "notice" and "good offices." His "character here persuades me [Jefferson] that they will be worthily bestowed on him, and that your further knowledge of him will justify the liberty I take of making him known to you." And Jefferson knew perfectly well what Michaux was going to Kentucky for, although he was later to pretend that the letter had been written solely in the interests of botany. For Jefferson himself recorded that Genet had wanted to have Michaux appointed Consul in Kentucky, and that the impossibility of making such an inland appointment had induced him, Jefferson, to write the second letter because Genet wished Shelby to "view" Michaux "as something more" than a botanist, "as a French citizen possessing his confidence."

At all events, Genet advised his Government that "Mr. Jefferson seemed to me to be quickly sensible of the utility of the project, but he told me that the United States had begun negotiations with Spain [concerning a warehouse] below New Orleans, and as long as this negotiation was not broken off, the delicacy of the United States did not permit them to take part in our operations; nevertheless he made me understand that he thought that a little spontaneous irruption of the inhabitants of Kentucky in New Orleans would advance matters." *The inhabitants of Kentucky*— Yes, organize an expedition, and, No, do not break any laws. The between the lines of all this seems fairly clear. "And

he put me into connection with several Congressmen of Kentucky, and notably with Mr. Brown who . . . adopted our plans with as much enthusiasm as an American is capable of manifesting. He showed me the ways of acting with success, gave me the addresses of many reliable men, and promised me that he would apply all his influence to the success of our projects."

There it was— a little diversion against the Spaniards to help the Jeffersonian negotiations, just as it was to be again in Miranda's and Burr's day. But in 1793, why the contact with Kentucky Congressmen if nothing was to be done in Kentucky?

5

The memorial writers in Paris had been right, it was really extremely easy. Men came volunteering from all sides, many of them veterans of the War of Independence. One had only to grant commissions, furnish money and promise ships. Hatred of the Spaniards did the rest. There was even for a while a "Legion of South Carolina" under d'Antignac, getting passports as emigrants to go overseas and fight in the French armies. But they needed too much money, and "God save the Republic," Mangourit exclaimed, "from Don Quixotte's with spendthrift [?] hearts."

Mangourit was very busy. "I pursue with ardor the execution of your instructions," he was informing Genet in August. He thought of his tasks all day and dreamed of them at night. He was himself "not so badly embarked on the affairs of Flora"—he knew all about Michaux, of course—"[and] before very long you will have a mass of . . . very useful facts." The "venerable friend" was al-

PROCLAMATION.

GALBAUD,

GOUVERNEUR GÉNÉRAL

DES ILES SOUS LE VENT,

A SES CONCITOYENS.

Nommé par le conseil exécutif provisoire de la république française, au gouvernement d'une des plus importantes Colonies, je vous dois l'expulsion de mes vrais sentimens & des principes qui dirigeront ma conduite.

Propriétaires Colons, je vous exhorte à ne voir dans les citoyens de couleur que des frères. Vous gémissez depuis long-temps sous le poids des malheurs, je partage vos peines : ma plus vive sollicitude sera de les adoucir. S'il en existe parmi vous qui puissent encore affecter d'abuser pour croire au retour de l'ancien ordre de choses, qu'ils reconnoissent à cette chimère, qu'ils cessent de penser aux moyens de la réaliser : ils ne peuvent que prolonger les maux de leur patrie.

Et vous, Citoyens de couleur, vous avez été opprimés pendant un grand nombre d'années, au mépris de la loi, un préjugé absurde vous avoit privé du droit qu'ont tous les hommes nés libres, de concourir par leurs vœux à sa formation.

Vous étiez rejetés avec dédain par quelques blancs à la voie de l'assemblée nationale, ils ont reconnu vos droits, ils ont vu leur erreur. Que tous les préjugés & les passions se taisent : le salut de la patrie demande l'union des bons citoyens. Je [illegible] voir qu'on cherche dans l'hu[illegible] la protection de la loi, je fais publier [illegible] pleurer tous les moyens de force qui [illegible] pour le faire. Vo[illegible] elles que vous devez avoir recours [illegible] ennemis de vos droits que nous habitons [illegible] lutter pour abattre tous nos ennemis, & rendre à la Colonie son ancienne splendeur.

Noirs, je fais toutes les peines que vous éprouvez : je vous regarde comme une des sources de la prospérité publique, vous me ferez revenir à vous pour cet objet, je reconnoîtrai de vos lumières, & ceux qui me feront voir les moyens de faire fleurir le commerce, peuvent être assurés de la reconnaissance de la patrie.

Les [illegible] & soldats, j'espère & j'attends de votre patriotisme que vous me seconderez de vos efforts, dans tous les objets d'intérêt général : souffrons pas que la liberté soit calomniée & paroisse odieuse, après tant de sacrifices faits pour elle.

Soldats de la patrie, la république attend de vous, dans les Colonies, le même zèle que vous avez toujours fait paroître sur le continent. Soyez sûrs que je ne puis envisager la situation où vous êtes, & les maux que vous avez soufferts, sans ressentir la plus vive douleur. Un [illegible] premiers soins sera de vous consoler. Je vous [illegible] vos plaintes, car la voie [illegible] ordonnation il n'y a pas d'armée. Il me seroit infiniment dur de me voir forcé de renoncer aux vues de paix [illegible] pour employer l'autorité que m'a confiée. Mais je vous déclare, avec la franchise d'un vieux soldat, que je ne transigerai jamais avec mes devoirs. Ainsi me de vos réclamations ne sera injuste, & elle est conforme à la loi, & je regarderai comme un devoir sacré de vous rendre justice. N'oubliez pas, camarades, que nous sommes Français, & que vous devez vous [illegible]

Voilà, Citoyens, les vrais principes de ma conduite. [illegible] la métropole n'a [illegible] Ils feraient toujours [illegible] compagnons, je ne connoîtrai, avec rigueur, la distance qui se trouve entre l'homme libre & l'esclave : c'est cette base de démarcation entre [illegible] que personne franchira.

Au Cap, le 12 mai 1793, l'an deuxième de la république [illegible]

G. ALBAUD.

AU CAP, DE L'IMPRIMERIE DE LA COMMISSION CIVILE DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE.

GENERAL GALBAUD'S PROCLAMATION

To the inhabitants of The Cape, French Santo Domingo, May 12, 1793. From the original in the Genet papers.

ways very helpful, General MacIntosh in Georgia was doing all he could, and there was a man spoken of as "the Invalid" who carried messages. For the rest, in a crowd of lesser agents, the leaders were Major Bert, a French veteran, William Tate and Elijah Clarke, Stephen Drayton, the Governor's secretary, and Samuel and Abner Hammond.

Tate was a fine worker, making treaties with the Cherokees and stirring up the Georgia back country with Clarke. "He conceives in a minute, decides on the instant and carves in the right joint." From Genet he eventually held a commission giving him the command, under Mangourit's orders, of the "Revolutionary Legion of America," and authorizing him to raise men outside of the United States—and no questions asked. Abner Hammond was a member of the trading firm of Hammond and Fowler, and perhaps one of his principal interests in the undertaking was the hope of supplanting Panton, Leslie and Company at St. Augustine in the very profitable Creek Indian trade. And Samuel Hammond was "our great hub." The commander of the "Revolutionary Legion of the Floridas." A veteran of the Revolution, colonel of cavalry, now Surveyor General at Savannah. "King Hammond" of the French Treaty with the Creeks—in which France offered to guarantee the Creek lands if they would serve the French as allies, stop fighting against the Americans and return their American prisoners.

An important person. The Hammonds, MacIntosh—they were most of them settled, respectable individuals, not merely adventurers and hungry soldiers of fortune. Well known men in the community. The same was to a great ex-

tent to be true in Burr's time. Congressmen, soldiers, merchants; Adair, Daniel Clark, Edward Livingston—all those men of the so called conspiracy. If in 1806, in 1793, what they were doing was so reprehensible, so injurious to the United States, one wonders how so many of them could have been found to occupy themselves with it. Unless it was that in their minds they carried the conviction of a tacit connivance on the part of the officers of Government.

6

Out in Kentucky, General Clark had been sure, in February, that "I can raise abundance of men in this Western country—men as well Americans as French. . . . Out of Kentucky, Cumberland, the settlement on Holston, the Wabash and the Illinois I can (by my name alone) raise fifteen hundred brave men, or thereabouts—and the French at St. Louis and throughout the rest of Louisiana, together with the American Spanish subjects at the Natchez, would, I am sure of it (for they all know me) flock to my standard. . . . With the first fifteen hundred alone I can take the whole of Louisiana for France," with three or four French frigates to block the Mississippi. If "farther aided" he could capture Pensacola, "and if Santa Fee and the rest of Mexico were objects—I know their strength and every avenue leading to them, for conquest. My intelligence is good respecting all these places," for he had "incessantly" employed spies for that purpose. He must have money, and "if France will be hearty and secret in this business my success borders on certainty."

Clark—heavily in debt as a result of the personal expenditures with which he had sustained his campaigns

against the Indians during the Revolution—was completely discouraged by the treatment which he had received from Virginia in return for his noteworthy military achievements in the West. Defeated once by the Indians in 1786, he had been censured and finally dismissed—very largely through the vicious and slanderous efforts of that astonishing character, James Wilkinson, perhaps the sorriest figure in American annals. And Clark did not know, hardly anyone then knew, the greater treacheries of that sinister personage. Clark only knew that "my country has proved notoriously ungrateful for my services," and he took it for granted that the Spanish venture which he was suggesting was to be a French conquest. The possession of New Orleans, he explained to Genet, would secure for France "the whole fur, tobacco and flour trade of this Western world." For himself and his followers he wanted land, and to "save Congress from a rupture with Spain on our accounts, we must first expatriate ourselves and become French citizens. This is our intention."

There was Clark with his great name and his great soldier's reputation throughout that Western country. De Pauw was at work; Brown was at work—receiving reports from Kentucky on the development of the project, and giving extracts of them, he later deposed, "without delay . . . to the then Secretary of State for the information of the President," so that the Government should constantly have been aware of what was going on; a project which it is true that Brown reported a good many years later as having, by Genet's avowal, been destined to accomplish the "conquest of Louisiana in behalf of France," but with Brown's understanding "from one of the heads of depart-

ments [Jefferson, obviously] that he was apprized of the project;" two entirely incompatible statements, of which however the second was certainly correct, in the light of Jefferson's horror of a French occupation of Louisiana which, in 1803, found expression in his purchase of that province from Napoleon—and the scientific, botanical Michaux was at work: a "prudent, reliable, active and intelligent man."

It was Michaux, "charged as agent of the French Republic with the administrative management of the [Louisiana] affair," who was carrying Genet's reply of July 12 to Clark, along with the letters of introduction to Shelby written by Brown and Jefferson. Genet was accepting Clark's suggestions, he was sending him a commission as commander of the "Independent and Revolutionary Legion of Mississippi," and expected to obtain for him the rank of Major General in the French armies, and "the time has come," he announced, "for our fellow citizens of Louisiana . . . to enjoy the benefits of liberty which their brothers and their friends are about to give them. It is to you, General, that is confided the management of this honorable mission."

And Michaux was to satisfy himself of Clark's reliability, he was to make all the necessary arrangements with the General, and advance money up to three thousand *livres,* leaving the Kentuckians, otherwise, to furnish their own funds; he was to enlist men outside the United States; and as for the Louisianians, he was continually to assure them "that our intention is to leave them masters of themselves, to organize themselves as they may desire, and that all we ask of them is to amalgamate their political and commer-

cial interests with those [of France] and of the United States."

But what Genet and Michaux did not know, any more than Clark, was that, while all the news of the doings in Kentucky was being reported to the American Government, it was also being sent to the Spanish authorities of the *Cabildo* in New Orleans, and by them to the Council of the Indies at Madrid. Sent by their secret service agent Number Thirteen—the despicable James Wilkinson, now a Brigadier General in the United States Army, and since 1787 a paid spy of Spain.

7

In Canada, too, they were busy. Genet had men working for him, planning an invasion from Vermont, Lyon, another Clark, Ira Allen—"a good sized round face, a full black eye, and bald on the top of his head"—there were agents around Quebec stirring up the inhabitants; in Nova Scotia the English were anxious, raising volunteers, persuading the Indians to remain faithful to King George because "God Almighty begins to see what the French are about." Mangourit, Hammond, Clark, Michaux, Allen, men, guns, money, ships—the routine disputes with Jefferson over privateers and maritime law must have seemed fairly insignificant in the sweltering, ill smelling, sticky July heat of Philadelphia. Always the rain and the lifeless air, and a great stink rising from the waterfront. A climate which the Frenchmen had never known before, an irritation of the flesh and of the spirit.

Ships. Genet must have ships for the Mississippi, and that was a good way of getting rid of the privateers that

were creating such a rumpus. Order them South, and first of all that "very pretty," fast sailing corvette, the *Little Sarah,* captured by the *Embuscade.* Refit her, change her name to the *Petite Démocrate,* and send her down to the Balize with the frigate. She had already been armed by the English, and Genet was providing her with additional guns taken from French vessels in the Delaware. He would give her a commission "and my own private instructions," he informed Jefferson, who was enquiring about her, and "these facts . . . cannot give rise to any difficulties on the part of your Government," because "when treaties speak, the agents of nations must obey."

But right away there were difficulties, very grave difficulties; for the President had ordained no further arming of privateers, and the merchants of the English faction were asking Governor Mifflin to call out the militia and prevent the vessel's departure. Mifflin sent his Secretary of State, Dallas of the Democratic Society, to interview Genet. A very famous interview, as it turned out, at which Bournonville was present. Genet lost his temper, he "flew into a great passion" and talked "extravagantly" about his wrongs, and he refused to countermand the brig's departure. Mifflin called out his militia, and there was tumult again in the streets. In the Cabinet, sitting without the President who was at Mount Vernon, Hamilton and Knox urged that batteries be mounted on Mud Island to sink the *Petite Démocrate* if she attempted to sail. But Jefferson implored them to leave everything to him, and went off to interview Genet himself.

And once again, Genet lost his temper, and shouted at Jefferson for a long time before the latter could get in a

word—"but he did not," Jefferson recorded in his diary, "on that, nor ever did on any other occasion in my presence, use disrespectful expressions of the President." He did, "in some part of his declaration . . . drop the idea of publishing a narrative or statement of transactions," and he insisted that he had a perfect right, according to the treaties, to arm privateers and that Congress was bound to see that the treaties were observed. Jefferson told him No, that was for the President to do—Jefferson, who had attacked the proclamation of neutrality because Congress had not been consulted. Then, Genet enquired, if the President decided against the treaty, to whom was the nation to appeal? *To whom was the nation to appeal?* Jefferson explained that under the Constitution the President was the last appeal. Genet bowed, "and said that indeed he would not make me [Jefferson] his compliments on such a Constitution, expressed the utmost astonishment at it and seemed never before to have had such an idea." Probably not, with Jefferson telling him all these weeks to wait for the next Congress.

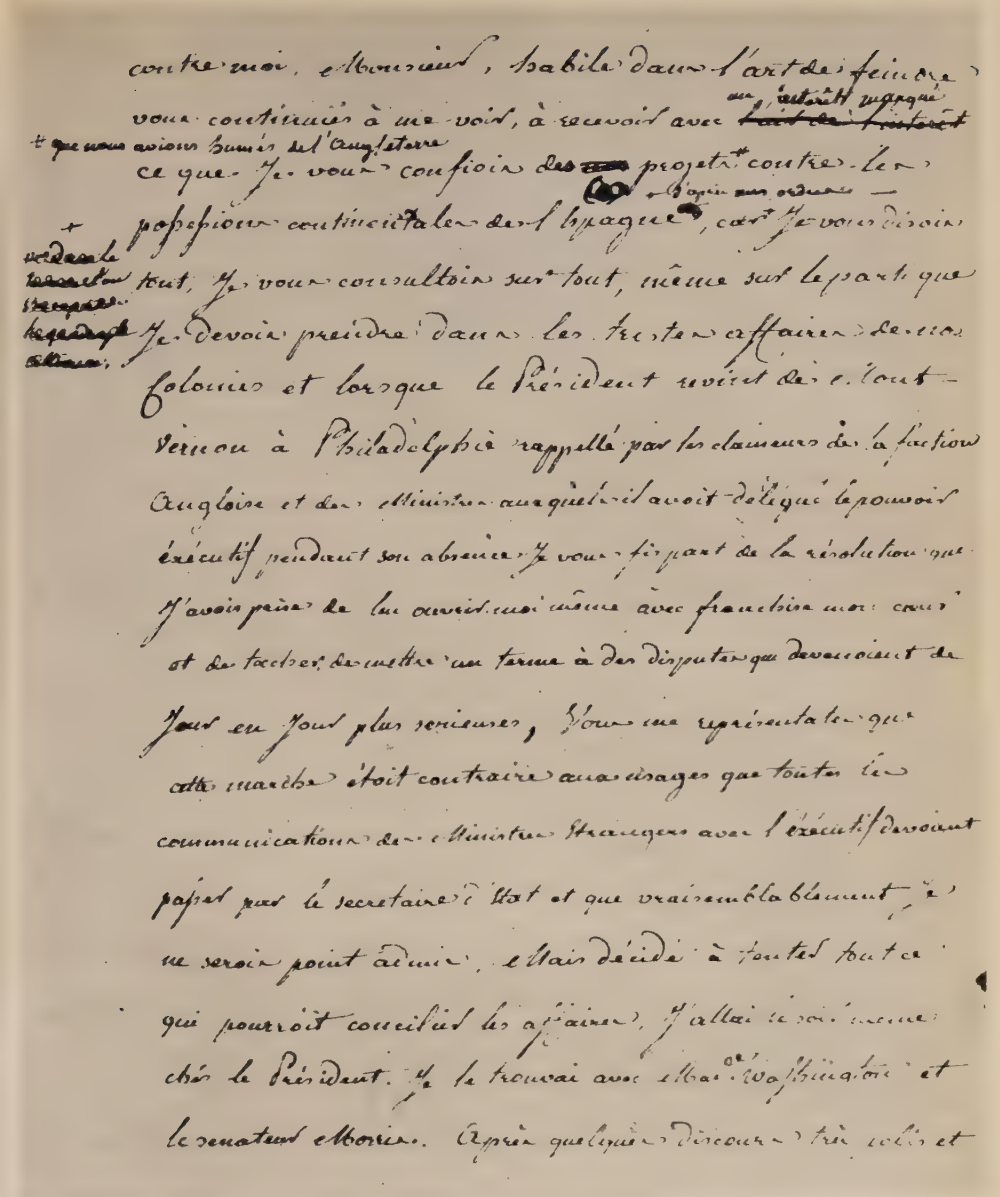
After that Genet regained his "perfect good humor and coolness"—the Citizen Minister had really been excessively angry at all this fuss. One straw too many. There was the *Petite Démocrate* a lawful prize, and there were the treaties, and be damned. They discussed the brig, and Jefferson begged him not to let her sail before the President returned. Genet informed him that she would drop down to Chester to take on supplies, and that she would probably not be ready to sail before the President returned. Jefferson went hurrying back to the Cabinet to report that he had arranged everything and that the brig would certainly not sail. Mifflin

called in his militia, and Genet changed names again. The *Petite Démocrate* became the *Cornelia*—and one wonders; for there was soon to be a young lady at New York whom Genet might already have met in Philadelphia; the daughter of the Governor of New York, and her name was Cornelia.

8

The President's coach came clattering in from Mount Vernon on July 11, and the President was naturally very much incensed. This young French jackanapes was flouting the Executive of the United States. Arming privateers right under his nose—except that his nose had been at Mount Vernon at the time. Messages were sent to Jefferson, who was sick in the country, and on July 12 Genet received word that the President, "desirous of having done what shall be strictly conformable to the treaties . . . and the laws . . . has determined to refer the questions [concerning privateers] to persons learned in the laws. As this reference will occasion some delay, he will expect . . . that in the meantime the . . . *Little Democrat* [will] not depart until his ultimate determination shall be made known." The delay would be as short as possible, and "the object of it being to obtain the best advice possible on the sense of the laws and treaties," Jefferson was persuaded that "you will think the delay well compensated."

Now this was a very reasonable letter; an admission, too, that the treaties might still have the law of the proclamation of neutrality; and it would have been good judgment on Genet's part, and very wise courtesy, to pay attention to it. Bournonville felt it, and may right away have said what he was later to write to his chief, in a letter which must be



GENET TO JEFFERSON

SAMPLE PAGES FROM THE DUPLICATE LETTER OF 1797

"Skillful in the art of deception, you continued to see me . . ." and the interview with Washington. Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the Genet papers.

très obligeante de la part de Mr. Washington, je me levai m'approchai de la chaise du Président et lui dis que je desirois avoir un entretien particulier avec lui. Il me fit d'abord la réponse que vous avés prévue, mais insistant et l'assurant que cela étoit de la plus haute importance pour le maintien de la bonne harmonie entre nos deux pays, que nous étions peut-être trompés tous les deux, et qu'il falloit nous entendre, il passa avec moi dans une chambre voisine. Nous étant assis je lui parlai en homme qui desiroit sincerement le bien. Je lui protestai que j'avois reçu et non donné le mouvement qui paroissoit inquiéter le gouvernement et que je ne croyois être que l'effet simultané de l'honnêteté et de la droiture humaine; je lui jurai, ce qui est de toute vérité, que j'avois été consterné en lisant dans les papiers publics certains articles que l'on m'attribuoit relatifs à sa conduite à l'égard de la France auxquels je n'avois eu aucune part; que ma correspondance en effet étoit vive, mais que s'il daignoit se mettre à ma place et considerer que par sa proclamation de neutralité et par les interpretations qui lui avoient été données il avoit frappé de nullité les traités

examined on another page. But it may be that Genet did not think the delay worth while; advice on the laws and treaties—from whom, from Jay, from Hamilton? Or it may be simply that he had used up all of his little store of patience. At all events, the *Petite Démocrate-Cornelia* sailed a few days later on a cruise.

But it really made very little difference. It was not the privateer alone that had incensed the President. There was something else under his nose when he wrote to ask whether the French Minister was "to set the acts of the Government at defiance with impunity, and then threaten the Executive with an appeal to the people?" There was a report from Jefferson stating that Genet had done that. He had told Dallas that he would appeal to the people over the President's head, and Dallas had repeated it to Jefferson in front of Mifflin, and Jefferson had reported it to Washington. In his diary, Jefferson recorded that Dallas had "mentioned some things which [Genet] had not said to me, and particularly his declaration that he would appeal from the President to the people."

There it was. Genet had threatened to appeal to the people. Jefferson said so, and the Cabinet hummed, and Hamilton rubbed his hands. Jefferson said so, and in 1797 Genet was to tell him why. "You worked," he put the angry words down, "to increase the panic of fear which had already seized upon the President and his Cabinet by informing him in a report of my alleged appeal to the people; for the purpose probably of making him feel the danger to which would be exposed the great and lucrative posts of the Federal Government, those tender objects of your desires"—Jefferson was Vice-President when the let-

ter was written—"[and] peace and all the speculations . . . which it favors . . . if an end was not put to my political existence, since you did not forgive me for having preferred the large interests of liberty to your petty political views."

Sound and fury. Genet knew better than that. He knew the real reason and told it to Jefferson in another paragraph of that remarkable letter. Fear, "the sentiment so common to philosophers." The French cause which Jefferson had secretly encouraged in his war with Hamilton was too successful suddenly; Genet had followed Jefferson's prompting too well; there was too much noise in the streets, too many Democratic Societies throughout the country, too many men enlisting for Louisiana and the Floridas; too much uproar, also, from irrepressible Consuls and sailors. The Federal Government was in a stew, and Jefferson was in a sweat, because it was all beginning to turn against his own republican party. He had sowed the storm, and now there was a whirlwind crashing across America. Soon the people would be roaring for war against England at France's side, or else a tremendous Federalist reaction would sweep Jefferson and his French partisans out of the windows—and in either case, Jefferson was afraid.

Genet did not say that, but he said this—"Fear seized upon your soul; like those Indians whom images made by their own hands intimidate and terrify, you trembled with every shudder of the Union and of the [British] Cabinet, and you sought only from then on to take away from me the weapons that you had given me, to unpopularize and smother the republican fires which were being kindled on every side."

And that was true. Izard had been right, and Jackson's

"cotton tail rabbit" was running. Prominent republicans were beginning to tell Jefferson that Genet had "totally overturned the republican interest in Philadelphia," and Hamilton was smiling away triumphantly. Something had to be done, and Madison thought so too. "Your account of Genet is dreadful. He must be brought right if possible. His folly will otherwise do mischief which no wisdom can repair;" something must be done, later, "to get him into a better train." And in June already, to Monroe, Jefferson did not "augure well of [Genet's] mood of conduct . . . I fear he will enlarge the circle of those disaffected to his country. I am doing everything in my power to moderate [his] impetuosity . . . and to destroy the dangerous opinion which has been excited in him"—by no one more than by Jefferson, the latter might have told Monroe—"that the people of the United States will disavow the acts of their Government, and that he has an appeal from the Executive to Congress and from both to the people." Wait for the new Jeffersonian Congress, Jefferson had been saying that right along.

And now, in July, never—in Jefferson's opinion to Madison—"was so calamitous an appointment made as that of [Genet]. Hot-headed, all imagination, no judgment, passionate;" a perfect ignoramus in international law, Jefferson added in another letter, who had apparently "never read a book of any sort in that branch of science"; Genet, who was as profoundly educated as any man that Jefferson had ever known; and "disrespectful and even indecent towards the President in his written as well as his verbal communications"—Jefferson's diary testified flatly to the contrary—"talking of appeals from him to Congress, from

them to the people, urging the most unreasonable and groundless propositions, and in the most dictatorial style"—a state of mind which Jefferson had done his best to encourage in his private advice to Genet which other pages have revealed; and it is interesting to find the notion of Genet's threatened appeal to the people in Jefferson's thoughts, and expressed to Monroe, *prior* to the interview with Dallas.

And in August, again to Madison, "I believe it will be true wisdom in the Republican party to approve unequivocally of a state of neutrality"—off with the old coat and quickly on with the new—"to abandon Genet entirely with expressions of strong friendship and adherence to his nation. . . . In this way we shall keep people on our side by keeping ourselves in the right. I have been myself under a cruel dilemma with him. I adhered to him as long as I could have a hope of setting him right . . . "—the treachery of these words is revolting—"finding at length that the man was incorrigible I saw the necessity of quitting a wreck which would but sink all who should cling to it. . . ."

There it was. Tell the President in writing that Genet had threatened to appeal to the people, and then abandon the wreck which Jefferson and his friends had scuttled. Because they were afraid; just as once Genet had abandoned the King's wreck, because, in his own words, he did not have the courage to remain aboard; and perhaps the poetry of that justice may have come to him in later, retrospective years.

9

Genet may have felt something in the air; there must have been rumors flying around, because Jay and Rufus King were hearing them. Or he may have felt a little guilty

about the *Petite Démocrate;* a little ashamed of his hastiness in ordering her out, because otherwise he had no regrets. As for the commissioning of the privateer—she was scarcely that either, since she had been taken over as a government ship, in command of a French naval officer—"the powers," he had told Dallas, "which he had received from his constituents gave him no latitude," because "the privilege to arm and equip their vessels was deemed by them indisputable, founded upon the plain meaning of . . . the treaty," and he could not, therefore, "enter into any arrangement which might appear as a waiver of that privilege."

But he was uneasy, harassed by all these diplomatic mishaps—he knew nothing, of course, of Jefferson's report to the President, and no one told him—and he made up his mind to cut through all these official negotiations, and "to open my heart . . . with frankness" to Washington and "try to put an end to disputes that were every day becoming more serious." Now this was very sensible and worth while —he was there to be seen, surely, the President of the United States; one might occasionally hope to talk with him without the yellow gloves and the white velvet scabbard—but Jefferson would not hear of it. It was contrary to usage, all communication with the Executive must pass through the Secretary of State, and Genet would probably "not be admitted."

But Genet went just the same, that very evening, and found the President with Mrs. Washington and Senator Morris. And "after some very polite and obliging discourse on the part of Mrs. Washington," Genet finally persuaded the President to hear him in private. "We were perhaps both of us deceived," he insisted, "and . . . it was neces-

sary to understand one another." Not a word from Washington about any appeal to the people. They passed into the next room, and Genet protested "that I had received and not given the impulse which served to disturb the Government"—it had come from the people—"[and] what is entirely true, that I had been entirely amazed" to learn that certain articles in the gazettes were being attributed to him, "but in which I had no participation." His correspondence was "indeed animated, but if [Washington] would condescend to put himself in my position and consider that by his proclamation of neutrality [and by his interpretation of it] he had annulled the most sacred treaties, deprived the French people, at a moment when they were in the greatest need of it . . . of the alliance which they considered as property dearly bought—he would acknowledge that unless I was a traitor I could not act otherwise." And Genet suggested that they discard the old treaties and formulate new ones.

But the President "simply told me that he did not read the papers, that he did not care what they said concerning his Administration"—on the contrary, he read them with considerable irritation, as a matter of fact—"[and] we left the room. He accompanied me as far as the staircase, took me by the hand and pressed it." And Genet was full of hope. Still not a word about Jefferson's report—and not a word of Genet's, either, concerning the private utterances of the President's first Cabinet officer. Genet did not betray—but it gave the Secretary of State a terrible turn the next day, so that he blushed violently, when he found out from Genet that the interview had occurred. And immediately the door opened, and the President walked in.

Genet looked at Washington and Jefferson to find "in their eyes" an invitation to remain—an invitation "for which I would willingly have given a part of my life"—but Jefferson abruptly motioned to him to retire.

And that was all. Nothing ever came of it. Genet did his best to learn from Jefferson whether the President had referred to his visit, but Jefferson remained "impenetrable." His report of the Dallas interview was on the President's table, and Hamilton was talking to Jay and King. The wreck was already abandoned.

10

Genet went back to his weary work—and the heat, the damnable heat and the maddening flies—and now, suddenly, the work was overwhelming. Canada, Louisiana, Florida —that was nothing, and the *Petite Démocrate* was a forgotten dream. It was Santo Domingo, "the jewel of the French West Indies." Something had happened during the last days of June in Santo Domingo. No one knew exactly what, yet, but there was a French squadron in the Chesapeake with prisoners of State and refugees, the town of Cap Français was in ashes, the blacks had risen again, the lamentable tale of desolation came moaning by every courier. Genet pushed all the other papers on his desk aside, and made room for the disaster. The catastrophe. Sonthonax and Polverel—what had they done; and who was this General Galbaud; and what was Admiral Cambis trying to explain? The British, the blacks, the royalists—come, Pascal to Baltimore, Bournonville at the papers, and try and make sense out of all this.

The candles burned later and later at the Citizen Minister's.

CHAPTER IV

LETTERS AT SEA

1

TWO letters in this month of July—at sea in August, reaching their destinations some time in September —that stand out on top of the piles of correspondence in two offices separated by the long Atlantic of 1793. Two letters that had better be seen together; the summing up, to date, of two fatally divergent points of view. One from Genet on July 31, to his Foreign Ministry in Paris—it is the rough drafts from which one must extensively quote —the other, on July 30, from the Foreign Ministry to Genet.

2

"If I have not written much," Genet explained, "I have done a great deal. If you have not been aware of it, it is because my successes have not matched my expectations, because I was always hoping to conquer the obstacles that were hampering my zeal, and because seeing myself upheld by the American people I thought that a government sprung from it would show itself worthy of its trust by obeying its supreme voice. [But I was entirely mistaken, *erased in both drafts*]."

The Federal Government—this paragraph was entirely erased from the first draft—"does not like our principles, because they have impeded its march, because they have nullified its monocratic tendency, because they disturb the affinity which it was being sought to establish between the American and English Constitutions. Consequently all the touching proofs of its attachment to France which the American people has given me . . . have only served to irritate, to sour men who should have been happy to see that the wisest policy that they could follow conformed to the sentiments of their fellow citizens."

Genet had not foreseen that the men to whom the American people had confided the duty of governing, "would betray their duty by multiplying obstacles, difficulties and disillusions before us. Jefferson is the only one concerning whom I can congratulate myself, and he is the butt for the hatred of the President and his colleagues; although he has had the [willingness, *erased*] weakness to sign their opinions which he condemns." The whole picture of Jefferson's private relations with Genet is in those sentences. "In any case, before we can be avenged the representatives of the people will assemble, and it is in their midst that those thunderbolts will speak which will overthrow our enemies and electrify plus all of America."

And another paragraph erased in the original draft—"We will soon be avenged. The people see that the behavior of its government is not similar to ours, that it encourages the arrogance of the English, and [the people] can no longer suppress its indignation. That is where my moderation has been valuable"—moderation; one has to smile a little at this tempestuous conservative—"Arriving

here aware of all the secrets of Washington's Cabinet, informed by his impolitic proclamation and by the revelations of his system of neutrality which he made to me at my first audience, I did not lose any time in taking advantage of this setback by putting the French nation in the most majestic light; in my speeches to the people as well as in my declarations to the Government, I assured the Americans that their interests were dearer to us than our own, that in the midst of the dangers surrounding us we were occupied only with their happiness, and that . . . we had just granted new favors to their commerce . . . opened our ports to them and, in fact, amalgamated them with our own citizens. . . ."

It was true; boiled down to plain words, the Convention had voted some very favorable commercial decrees affecting American commerce.

3

In the meantime, "I can at least console myself for the delays which my great enterprises have experienced in considering that I have upheld all our rights with firmness; that I have allowed no treaty to be abolished; that I have prepared the revolution of New Orleans and Canada; that with privateers maintained in spite of the bitterest opposition I have destroyed the maritime commerce of the English in these waters; that I have provisioned our islands and our fleets as successfully as the feeble means which the American Treasury has placed at my disposal have allowed . . . that, finally, I have acquired the esteem and the good wishes of all Republican Americans by tightening the bonds of fraternity between them and ourselves, and arresting the ambitious progress of monocracy."

There was what he claimed to have accomplished, in some fifteen weeks; and, without arguing about "the ambitious progress of monocracy," it was every word of it true. That was the remarkable part of it. Without once overstepping his instructions.

Now he was sending long reports home in a frigate, and "you will soon enough know the details of my diplomatic reception, of the guerilla warfare which I am carrying on with the Federal Government concerning the strict execution of our treaties. This last picture will contrast strikingly with the first. In the one you will see a good, generous, grateful people gather from all sides in front of the envoy of the French nation, demonstrate to him with cries of joy . . . with declarations burning with patriotism that the democrats of America realize perfectly that their fate is intimately bound up with ours, that it is to their obvious interest to join us in overthrowing the monster of despotism. . . . In the other you will see [small and ambitious men, sold to England, *erased*] men delivered to England by a financial system the basis of which is her commerce, attached to wealth and honors in order to harm our operations as much as they can out of hatred for our principles"—and when he wrote that he must evidently have been thinking of Hamilton.

And Genet's position, "as you see, is difficult, but my courage is not dismayed by anything, and I dare guarantee to you that I will reach the goal which you have shown me. My real political campaign will begin with the session of Congress, and it is then that you will be able to judge your agent. Hail."

The goal which you have shown me—and from that it

would appear that Genet did not yet know that Lebrun was no longer at the desk in Paris.

4

Deforgues was at the desk, writing that letter—just twenty-four hours earlier—in which he expressed so much doubt as to Genet's ability to arm the Kentuckians. A very disagreeable letter, perhaps one of the most disagreeable letters that a diplomat has ever received from his Government. But the most curious thing about it is the failure—on the part of many historians who have eagerly seized upon it as a further means of discrediting Genet out of the mouth of his own Ministry—their failure, apparently, to recall, or at all events to point out, that the Girondists had fallen, and that the French Government of July, 1793, which so rebuked Genet, was not the French Government of November, 1792, which had sent him to America for the purpose of obeying certain very positive instructions.

The whole letter must be read with that tragic accident in mind; with a constant appreciation of the "Mountain's" hatred of the Girondists and all their works; with the fact clearly in view that the appointment of Genet to the American post was one of the grounds of accusation against Brissot and his colleagues. An intrigue, the Robespierre men called it—the old schemes for saving the King from the vengeance of the *Commune,* no doubt—and if it was an intrigue, Madame Roland exclaimed, "let us pray that all intriguers may resemble Brissot. . . . Let the ignorant Robespierre . . . declaim against [Genet] by calling him the friend of Brissot; let [him] procure by [his] clamor the recall of the one and the trial of the other—[he] will only

add to the proofs of [his] own villany and stupidity without hurting the fame of those whom [he] may find means of depriving of existence."

Genet, in his day, must have understood all that, must have perfectly appraised the catastrophe for him of the Jacobin upheaval. And for this reason, perhaps, he paid no attention to the letter when it reached him. Congress would soon be assembling, his only salvation lay in success. Let him once announce the liberation of Louisiana and the Floridas, the uprising of Canada, possibly the participation by America in the French war—and the Ministerial pens would scratch in a different key. He had his instructions, and these had not been countermanded. And in any case, matters had gone too far in America when the letter reached him. And he knew things about Robespierre, too.

Still, it was a terrible letter; fashioned in a temper of hostility, pouncing upon errors of procedure, dilating upon the undeniable failure to keep on good terms with Washington, phrased in unassailable generalities which entirely ignored the undercurrents of American affairs and the specific clauses of the envoy's instructions, in order to produce a resultant condemnation, the facile, and in some respects insincere, truth of which could not so readily be refuted. A document to delight a man's enemies.

5

"I see," the letter remarked, "that you have been received by that frank and hospitable [American] people with all the demonstrations of attachment with which your predecessors have been overwhelmed. . . . You imagined in consequence that it was up to you to direct the political

operations of that people and to invite it to make common cause with us. . . ." Genet did not have to imagine it, the policy was plainly set forth in his instructions.

"You took it upon yourself to arm privateers, to order enlistments in the city of Charleston, to cause the condemnation of prizes before even having been recognized by the American Government, and before having received its assent to a measure of such importance"—he had received the assent of the Governor of South Carolina, however—"what am I saying, with the certainty of its disapproval because you had under your eyes the proclamation of the President of the United States. . . ." Only the proclamation had not even been issued until after Genet's departure from Charleston. "The [Executive] Council can never have authorized you to exercise proconsular powers in a friendly and allied country, to take action there without the positive agreement of the Government and before having been recognized by its chiefs." And that was true; it would have been wisdom to wait, although they had made no bones about it in Charleston since the matter was covered by existing treaties.

Genet's instructions, Paris observed, were "directly opposed to this strange interpretation. You are ordered to treat with the Government and not with a portion of the people, to be the mouthpiece of the French Republic before Congress, and not the leader of an American party"—and that also was true; except that Genet, with Jefferson at his ear, had understood that his cause would be the cause of Congress and that it was the Federalist Government which was itself at the head of an English party.

And what, Deforgues asked, "would be the success in

France of a foreign agent who, instead of negotiating with the Representatives of the People and with the Executive Council, presumed to surround himself with a party, to receive and distribute addresses, to arm privateers in our ports against friendly nations, to occupy himself finally, as you announce in your last dispatch, with the convocation of the National Assembly. . . ? We must not, we cannot recognize in America any legitimate authority other than that of the President and of the Congress. It is there that the will of the people resides without exception. . . ."

True. But what were you to do when the Secretary of State told you that the views of Congress would be quite different from those of the President, and that he did not represent the will of the people at all?

6

And now "it seems, Citizen, that since your arrival at Charleston, you have been surrounded by ignorant or very ill intentioned people. . . . They no doubt were not aware that the American Government, whose pecuniary resources are extremely limited, has never ceased making considerable advances to us in order to furnish us with supplies . . . that we have never made an unfruitful request to that Government, and that we have always experienced from it the friendliest attitude, joined to that wise and even timid policy which suits the position and the interests of the United States, and which especially characterizes General Washington. . . ." Well, Genet had been ordered to collect the American debt, and he was not succeeding, and there was one unfruitful request to prove the rule.

And "you say that Washington does not forgive you your successes, and that he hinders your progress in a thousand ways. You are ordered to treat with the American Government, there only can you possibly meet with real success. . . . Dazzled by a false popularity, you have alienated the one man who must be for us the mouthpiece of the American people. . . . It is not through the effervescence of an indiscreet zeal that one can succeed with a cold and calculating people. . . ." And as for the Canadians and the Kentuckians, "in the midst of the festivals which you have described," that was all incomprehensible; but "I observe to you that, without openly compromising the neutrality of the United States, you cannot prepare at Philadelphia a [naval] expedition against New Orleans. . . ." And why not, Genet might have inquired; for since when was the departure of French frigates for any destination whatsoever a breach of American neutrality? French frigates and British frigates.

And so "I can in no way endorse the means which you have employed in order to reach the patriotic and laudable goal which you have in view. Do not delude yourself any longer concerning the brilliance of a false popularity which alienates from you the representatives of the people without whom it will be impossible for you to conduct to a happy conclusion the negotiations with which you are charged. Apply yourself to gain the confidence of the President and of Congress; repel . . . the perfidious insinuations of those who will seek to mislead you"—and there was excellent advice, like Izard's—"and persuade yourself, especially, that it is by means of reason and not enthusiasm that you will be able to exercise your influence upon a people which, even

Paris le 28 Brumaire, l'an 2.
de la République Française,
une & indivisible.

Le Ministre des Affaires étrangères
au Citoyen Genêt.

Sur les plaintes très graves qui ont été portées au Conseil exécutif provisoire concernant la manière dont tu as rempli les fonctions qui t'ont été confiées, il a nommé le Citoyen Fauchet pour te remplacer en qualité de Ministre plénipotentiaire près les Etats-unis.

Tu lui remettras sans délai tous les papiers qui concernent la Légation de la République à Philadelphie et spécialement les pièces relatives à la comptabilité

DEFORGUES, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TO GENET

Announcing Genet's recall. Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the Genet papers.

dont tu as été chargé, de même que ton
prédécesseur. J. Desorgues

when it was warring against its tyrants, never ceased to be cold."

There it was. Something to read by the light of the September candles; while the bonfires burned on the corners, and the funeral bells tolled, and the pest carts clattered through the streets in a reek of disinfectant camphor and garlic, to the sound of exploding gunpowder—horse pistols fired at the bedsides of patients to clear the poisonous air—in the days of the plague. For that disaster, too, was in store to try men's souls; the final tribulation of that infernal summer; a visitation from Heaven brought down, some believed, by the construction of a new, ungodly theatre at Philadelphia, others, by the wickedness of the republican maniacs.

7

"My courage is not dismayed by anything, and I dare guarantee to you that I will reach the goal which you have shown me."

It was on July 31 that Genet wrote those words, and on August 1 the Cabinet was meeting at the President's House. On August 1 and 2. To decide what to do with Genet. All around him, in Paris and in Philadelphia, during that week which saw July turn into August, the pens were quietly scratching away at his destruction. And he had no inkling, his courage was not dismayed, he could guarantee success.

Actually, with the Jacobins in power in Paris, he was ruined. For Jefferson's report of the Dallas interview had done its work, and what they were discussing at the President's House was a request for his recall. And Knox wanted him dismissed instantly; and Hamilton wanted the

President himself to publish an appeal to the people, with all the correspondence. He talked a long time, and bitterly, and the next day he was at it again, indicting the whole French cause in America and the Democratic Societies. Looking at Jefferson across the table. And Jefferson was opposed to dismissal, and to any appeal to the people. There had been too much disagreement within the Cabinet itself, and the feelings of France must be spared. But Knox did not think it necessary to spare the feelings of the President. On the contrary, and perhaps for the very purpose of inflaming him, the General suddenly produced a republican lampoon entitled *The Funeral of George Washington* and showing him mounted upon the scaffold.

And as Jefferson recorded the scene, "the President was much inflamed; got into one of those passions when he cannot command himself; ran much on the personal abuse which had been bestowed upon him; defied any man . . . to produce one single act . . . which was not done from the purest motives; that he had never repented but once the having slipped the moment of resigning his office, and that was every moment since; that by God he had rather be in his grave than in his present situation; that he had rather be on his farm than to be made emperor of the world . . . that that rascal Freneau"—Jefferson's clerk, Freneau—"sent him three of his papers every day . . . that he could see in this nothing but an impudent design to insult him."

They were obliged to adjourn because the President was in such a state, and by God it was understood that Genet must be recalled. Notes were supplied by Hamilton—which Genet was later to believe had been originally drawn up by a certain Lewis, a lawyer occasionally employed by

the Treasury—and on August 16, Jefferson was ready with his draft. "You took the pen, you, Mr. Jefferson!" Genet pointed his finger at him in 1797, "to write that long memorial to [Gouverneur] Morris, filled with assertions without any proof. . . ." They made some changes; at Hamilton's desire they struck out some words soft soaping France; and on August 23 the document was ready to go, in care of Captain Culver.

Another letter at sea, crossing the long Atlantic. But not a word of it yet to Genet. "Skillful in the art of deception, you [Jefferson] continued to see me, to receive with marked interest what I confided to you . . . for I told you everything, I consulted you about everything." And when Genet had to go to New York, and went to take his leave, the President received him very politely, and drank wine with him. Not a word about recalls, not a word about appeals to the people. Jay and King were on their way to New York with the Dallas story, and Jefferson's draft to Morris was being prepared, but in Philadelphia there were only smiles and madeira.

8

It was a very long document, the complaint to Morris with its covering letter of August 23. There had, it stated, developed in Genet "a character and conduct so unexpected and so extraordinary as to place us in the most distressing dilemma." The country's honor had been offended in the person of the President, the country's character "grossly traduced in the conversations and letters of this gentleman."

The French Minister—the accusations were furnished with citations of specific cases—"after deciding for himself

ultimately, and without respect to the authority of the country . . . proceeds to do what even his sovereign could not authorize—to put himself within the country on a line with its government, to act as co-sovereign of the territory; he arms vessels, levies men, gives commissions of war. . . . When the Government forbids their citizens to arm and engage in the war he undertakes to arm and engage them. When they forbid vessels to be fitted in their ports . . . he commissions them to fit and cruise. When they forbid . . . jurisdiction [over prizes] to be exercised within their territory by foreign agents, he undertakes to uphold that exercise. . . ." Not content with "using our force . . . in the military line," Genet "undertakes also to direct the civil government and particularly for the Executive and Legislative bodies to pronounce what powers may or may not be exercised by the one or the other. Thus . . . he promises to respect the political opinions of the President *till the Representatives shall have confirmed or rejected them: as* if the President had undertaken to decide what belonged to the decision of Congress"—and as if Jefferson had not said so loudly himself!

It was a very complete statement of the Federal Government's case, a destructive indictment of Genet, always assuming, as Jefferson did assume, that Genet's interpretation of the treaties was untenable. But Jefferson had to admit that it *was* a question of interpretation, that it was "unjust in either [party] to claim an exclusive right of interpretation," and that a Foreign Minister under those circumstances should have referred the matter to his own Government. So that in spite of Vattel, the Federal Government's interpretation was not infallible any more than

Genet's. And yet the recital of Genet's maritime crimes was founded on that infallibility. Genet was wrong because the United States were right, but the United States might not be right.

As for his impertinences, some of them were quoted, and "we draw a veil over the sensations which these expressions excite. No words can render them." But "we see in them neither the portrait of ourselves nor the pencil of our friends, but an attempt to embroil both." The American Government "thus insulted and set at defiance by [Genet] . . . determined still to see in these proceedings but the character of the individual, and not to believe, and it does not believe, that they are by instructions from his employers. . . ." Jefferson alluded to "our long forbearance under his gross usurpations and outrages"; he told how Genet was endeavoring "to excite discord and distrust between our citizens and [the Government], between the different branches of our Government, between our nation and his"—and that was a good paragraph from the patron of Freneau, from the former Minister to France who had abetted the early discussions of a revolutionary movement in that country.

And he informed Morris that the French Government must see "that the case is pressing"; if Genet persevered, "we may be forced even to suspend his functions before a successor can arrive to continue them." Morris must "lay the case then immediately before his government," but at the President's desire "in the most soothing view and as the result of an unavoidable necessity on his part." The "desiring" of Genet's recall was a "painful necessity."

But it seems odd that there was no mention of any threatened appeal to the people.

9

Morris, though a royalist, had his influence with the grand moguls of the Terror—some of whom had their ears stretched in the direction of the absent Princes—and to his documents, received and forwarded to Deforgues in October, the latter replied that "I shall give the Council an account of the punishable conduct of their agent in [America], and I can assure you, beforehand,"—*beforehand*—"that they will regard the strange abuse of their confidence by this agent, as I do, with the liveliest indignation. The President . . . has done justice to our sentiments in attributing the deviations of [Genet] to causes entirely foreign to his instructions"—the Girondists were on trial at the time, why not have asked them about that—"and we hope that the measures which are to be taken will . . . convince . . . your government that so far from having authorized the proceedings and criminal manœuvres of Citizen Genet our only aim has been to maintain the most perfect harmony between the two nations."

Genet, without a word to say for himself, was prejudged; and inevitably, for he was a Girondist, an appointee of Brissot, and Roland, and Lebrun, and these letters from America were sweet reading for the "Mountain." Another stone to fling at the Girondists. Deforgues meant to ask for Morris's recall, too, but no matter. To the lantern with Genet, and it was too bad that he was not to be there to ride in the tumbril with Vergniaud and the others on that October 31. A brilliant season for the scaffold just then—the Queen on October 16, the singing Girondists at the end of the month, Madame Roland on November 8.

Deforgues got out all his memoranda of July, in which

he could read that "it is likely that ill intentioned persons, better informed than Citizen Genet concerning the real attitude of the American people, have purposely surrounded him with a false popularity in order to render him disagreeable to the Government. [He] has been too zealous, badly advised and dazzled by [his reception]. But his intentions appear to be very patriotic . . . it would be a mistake to recall Citizen Genet. . . ." Deforgues arranged his papers, and in November, Robespierre was telling the Convention that "Genet . . . *faithfully fulfilled the views and instructions of the* [Girondist] *faction that selected him*"—and these words of the Incorruptible must never be forgotten. But Genet had "employed the most extraordinary means to irritate the American Government against us; he has presumed to address it without any pretext in a threatening tone . . . he has done his best to make our principles suspect or fearsome by outraging them with ridiculous applications."

On November 28, Deforgues was writing to Genet—or a clerk was writing for him, very neatly—that "as the result of very grave complaints which have been brought to the provisional Executive Council concerning the manner in which thou hast fulfilled the functions which were confided to thee"—Robespierre had just appraised that manner—"it has named Citizen Fauchet to replace thee as Minister Plenipotentiary to the United States. . . ." There was to be a Commission, they told Morris, four men, Fauchet, Leblanc, Laforest and Petry, a board of directors; and the two Consuls, Laforest and Petry, Morris thought would control the board and keep an eye on the young Fauchet.

But that was not all. Morris had Jacobin friends; Mor-

ris was seeing to it that Paine, the American Girondist, stayed in prison; and Morris was not satisfied with Genet's recall. He talked to some of the grand moguls of the Terror, and they agreed with him. And in October, already—he had not wasted any time—he was able to inform Washington that "it is probable that the new Minister, on being presented, will ask you to aid in securing the person and papers of the old one." Fauchet was given his orders; the arrest of Genet and his decree of death. And "I have favored, or rather excited"—those are Morris's brutal words—"the idea of this procedure for several reasons. Such a public act will place in a contemptible light the faction connected with Mr. Genet. The seizure of his papers . . . will give a lesson to others, and the Commissioners who exercise the highest-handed authority will . . . feel the necessity of respecting your government lest they should meet a similar fate."

These matters were all recorded, and sent steaming off to Captain Culver to be rushed back to America. Some more letters at sea, in the captain's cabin, little white forerunners of doom. Later on the Commissioners sailed, in a frigate, and aboard with them they were carrying, it was said, the wooden and metal contraptions, the swinging platform, and basket, and knife, of a guillotine.

CHAPTER V

THE SAILORS

1

SANTO DOMINGO.

Facts began to sort themselves. Positive facts—the city of The Cape destroyed by the blacks after a landing by the sailors of the French fleet, with General Galbaud at their head, and repulsed by the colored partisans of the Civil Commissioners for Santo Domingo; the fleet and the merchant convoy in the Chesapeake, with hundreds of white refugees aboard in the most pitiful state of destitution, for whom immediate charity and hospitals must be provided; General Galbaud and his family on board of the *Jupiter,* deposed from his governorship by the Civil Commissioners and under orders of arrest to be transported to France, and the sailors of the *Jupiter,* the sailors throughout the squadron, all boiling with mutiny, refusing to surrender the person of Galbaud. Other debatable facts—the responsibility for the castastrophe assigned by each faction to the other, the civil and the naval authorities; the reported determination of the Civil Commissioners to exterminate the white colonists and hand the province over to the men of color; the alleged royalist conspiracy, said to be led by Galbaud, by which the colony was to be given up to the English.

One cannot presume to relate in these crowded pages the history of revolutionary Santo Domingo; of the black tragedy which seared the fairest of the islands of France in the West Indies with fire and drenched it with blood, filling the ports of America with horror stricken fugitives, women scarcely clothed, old men trembling with infirmities, merchants grown penniless overnight—some glimpse of it is to be found in the papers of Stephen Girard—children lost in a terrified din of strangers, vagrant survivors of family holocausts. It came as the most sinister flowering of the French Revolution, with its decreed equality not only of rank but of skin, in a community helplessly unprepared by tradition, by local necessity and by long social habit for so profound a transformation; a dripping crimson upon the bright tropical green of rich valleys; a madness of black and yellow figures seen to the sound of African drums through the flaming smoke of insane destructions; a dark nightmare of woe, and massacre, and lamentation. A supreme folly of the Girondist philosophy, of Brissot and his Society of the Friends of the Blacks, out of which arose at the end the great figure of Toussaint L'Ouverture.

One cannot even attempt any considerable discussion of the documents relating to those unimaginable events which occur in abundance in the Genet papers. Accounts of eye-witnesses at The Cape, repeating the tale of disaster from street to street; dispatches from Admiral Sercey—sixteen pages almost illegible with the grief and dismay which overflowed from his pen, for the province was lost and a fleet was in mutiny—minutes of the great courts naval held by Genet and the consular officers aboard the frigates in New York harbor, with the admirals and their staffs around the tables

on deck, and the crews all humming in the rigging, while the ceremonial guns boomed; the frantic correspondence of distracted commanders, the furious vindications of accused conspirators, the blunt impertinences of rebellious deputations, covered with the laborious signatures of honest, sea going Breton names; the long, official reports that went to France. These await the inspection of a more specialized research.

One can only pretend very briefly to describe the public drama of those June days of the terror, of the later August days of the sailors' revolt; to show the nature of the tremendous task with which Genet was confronted, and its distressing effect upon his plans; to record the attitude and the purpose which animated his vigorous decisions.

2

The Civil Commissioners from France, Polverel and Sonthonax, were in the western province of Santo Domingo for the purpose of restoring order in a colony stricken by two previous insurrections, and disrupted by white royalist movements tending generally towards a separation in favor of England, and antagonistic locally to the mulattoes to whom the National Assembly had lately granted citizenship. Outside of the towns, in the Plain, the blacks were still in rebellion.

The powers of the Commissioners were unlimited—to treat as traitors all bodies of troops refusing obedience, to depose and deport any persons fomenting trouble—as they themselves expressed it, they were the Law and the National Convention personified. Their methods, in the face of an organized white hostility which has perhaps been underesti-

mated, were those of the torch and the sword. Sonthonax, a proper Jacobin, a personage of slight personal or public merit, was the leader, and of him it was said that wherever he passed by there was fire and massacre. And to the white obstruction to the laws, to the colonists' intrigues with England, he replied by attracting to himself the mulattoes and openly catering to their civic privileges until the whites were convinced of his intention to exterminate them. And his emancipation of the blacks was yet to come. He went everywhere with a mulatto escort, he had proclaimed that they alone constituted the people of Santo Domingo, he loathed the royalist whites whom he accused of conspiracy with the enemy and insubordination to the mulatto citizenship law. The two parties snarled at each other, each guilty of fanaticism and distrust. And Sonthonax unquestionably demented by the rabies of republicanism. But Sonthonax, with Polverel, was the highest authority in Santo Domingo, he was the French Republic, and the Law was on his side.

And in May, while the Commissioners were away bombarding Port-au-Prince into submission, General Galbaud, with his Creole wife, arrived at The Cape from France as Governor, and was received with joy by the whites. He had himself recognized by the municipality, although the Commissioners were absent, and soon rallied around him all the opposition to their rule. And on June 10 the Commissioners were back at The Cape, fresh from their republican severities at Port-au-Prince. In the harbor an important merchant convoy and its protecting fleet were awaiting permission to sail for France. Galbaud visited the Commissioners, received their recriminations for his various proclamations and for his illegal assumption of authority prior

to their endorsement, and requested to be sent back to France. The Commissioners retorted with charges of disloyalty and the spreading of false rumors of distress and famine, invoked the law, applicable to Galbaud, which forbade officials to own property in the island, deposed him, and ordered him aboard the frigate *Normande* on June 13 for deportation.

In the meantime—Galbaud's aide, Conscience, who was of course not unprejudiced, later informed Genet—"the orgies which had begun with the arrival of the Commissioners became more and more scandalous. There occurred every day banquets and fetes at the Commissioners', at the close of which the mulattoes, who were the only ones or almost the only ones invited, gave themselves up to all sorts of horrors. Drunk with wine . . . they paraded their boldness in all the streets . . . they insulted the whites pitilessly . . . they killed several of them without any retribution obtainable from the Commissioners."

And on June 14 the Commissioners proclaimed a seven o'clock evening curfew regulation for the sailors of the fleet and convoy, and the trouble began. Genet was to declare the measure an excellent one, and to condemn the merchant captains who incited their men to disobedience, but at The Cape the sailors went wild. For the next three days there were deputations and riots, and on June 17 the proclamation was withdrawn. But now the mulattoes were above themselves. Sailors were hustled and stoned in the streets, one of them was forced to apologize on his knees for having bumped into a mulatto, in a café another mulatto struck a naval officer with a sword. Protests to the Commissioners were met with the answer that the sailors were probably in

many cases the aggressors, and that the Commissioners must know both sides. The mulattoes were swaggering up and down the streets, armed, and the sailors were boiling for vengeance.

And on June 19, "a great deal of excitement on the anchorage"—and suddenly the sailors were loose. Deputations aboard the *Normande* to fetch Galbaud; the General carried from frigate to frigate with tremendous uproar and installed in the *Jupiter,* acclaimed as Governor. The admirals, Cambis and Sercey, were helpless; it seemed best to let the sailors yell and cavort—and during the night the frigates were swung to bring their broadsides to bear on the town.

On June 20, at three o'clock in the afternoon, two thousand sailors, and Galbaud with them, went roaring ashore.

3

It was to prevent excesses, Conscience afterwards insisted, because someone in authority was needed to keep the sailors in check. The events of the next two days scarcely confirmed this interpretation, and gave every corroboration to the conviction that Galbaud had placed himself at the head of the "descent" of the sailors for the purpose of seizing the Commissioners and making himself master of The Cape.

The arsenal, weakly garrisoned by detachments of Breton infantry, was quickly seized by the Breton sailors—all of them harangued by Galbaud—and at five o'clock the General's people were attacking the Government House in which the Commissioners were entrenched with their

guard of seventy-five blacks. A stout resistance, and nightfall saw Galbaud withdrawing to the arsenal while his sailors began to break their way from wine cellar to wine cellar. Only the business part of the town was now held by the whites, and everywhere else the mulattoes were on the rampage, pillaging and slaughtering. The Commissioners themselves escaped to the outskirts, where it seems incontestable that they conferred with Macaya and some of the other "brigand" leaders of the revolted blacks. No one could be sure afterwards who had done it, and each side accused the other, but at midnight the blacks came pouring into the town and the prisons were opened. Then "with the torch in one hand and the sword in the other, they hurled themselves into the streets"—and Sercey testified that whites known to be friendly to the Commissioners had been seen leading the "brigand" bands. The town was "an ant heap of negroes and mulattoes."

With the dawn of June 21 steady gunfire was heard again—but Sercey managed to keep his frigates silent—and at six o'clock in the morning Galbaud started off from the arsenal with five columns converging with artillery upon the Government House. Two hours later the attack was in full swing, when a sudden sortie of mulattoes from the church took one of Galbaud's columns in rear. And then panic. All aboard the ships! "A continuous firing from the windows by the armed black slaves who were recognized, everything increases the [general] terror, and the unhappy city was immediately abandoned and put to the sack."

It happened like that, at the sound of a voice; a mob of sailors tearing down the streets to the waterfront; Galbaud in great difficulty to extricate himself; at the arsenal—which

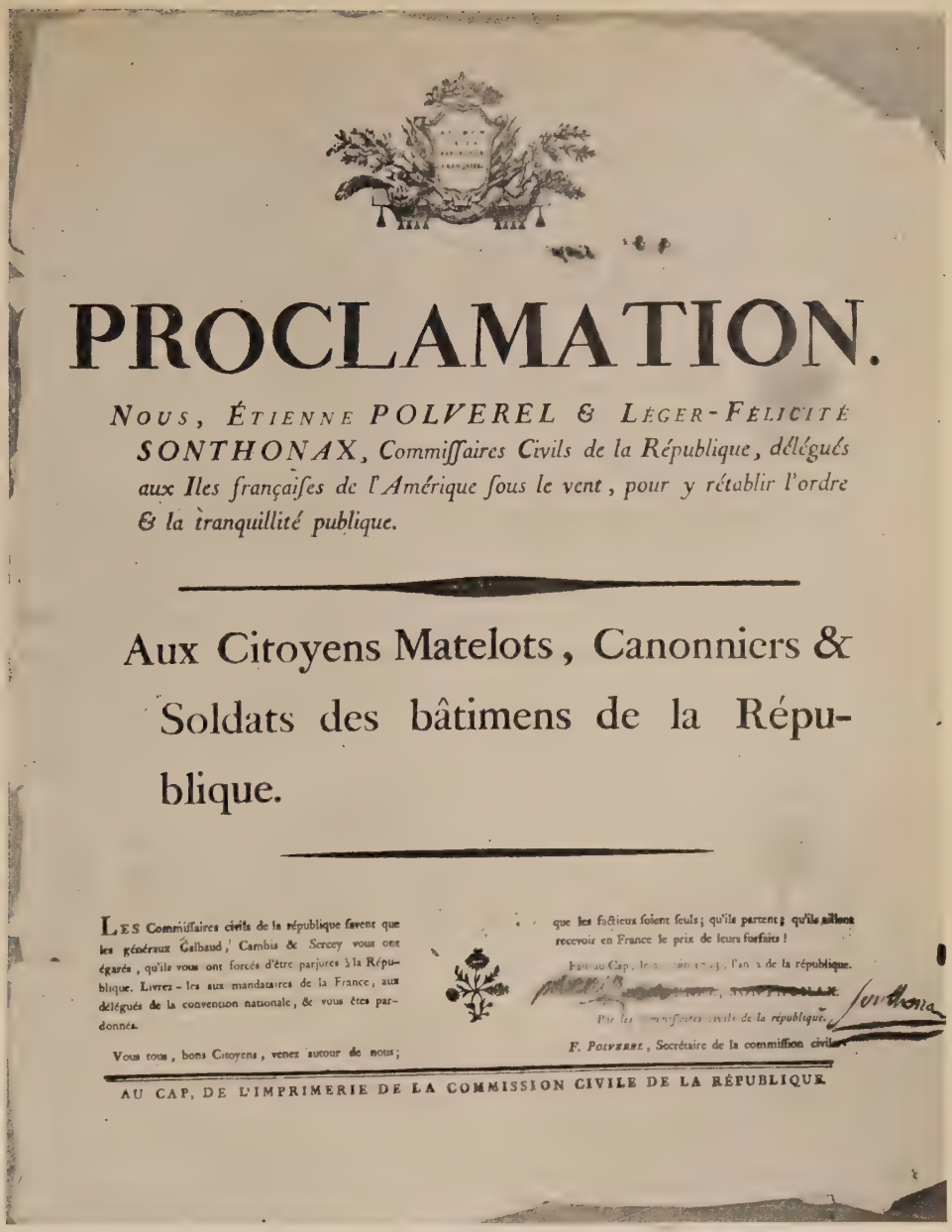
could so easily have been held—men gone crazy with fright, jumping into the water, Galbaud himself splashing about trying to reach his skiff. And behind, the grinning mulattoes driving everybody into the sea, sweeping the streets with musketry. Back aboard the *Jupiter* at last, and Galbaud silent and apathetic while Madame Galbaud bestirred herself among the shuddering sailors, praising his patriotism. And a few days later, with the ships packed to the rails with refugees, the fleet sailed, helter skelter for the first American port.

And ashore the town was in ashes, the hospitals had been fired, the whole Plain was smoking. Inconceivable disorder, Genet wrote, "conflagration, looting, slaughter, all the ills succeeded one another rapidly and set in motion a destruction of which it is difficult to foresee the end." The Cape, Sercey was reporting, had been surrendered to "all the horrors of a city taken by storm by cannibals. It was pillaged, it was burned," and on June 23, when the ships received the crowds of women, old men and children "whom the flames and the knives had not yet reached—then . . . the haughty reply of the Civil Commissioners was remembered, that they had nothing to fear when at the sound of a whistle four hundred thousand men would answer the call."

Galbaud and Sonthonax, the whites and the blacks, the skin and the Law—so the terror came to Santo Domingo.

4

Genet took all this fairly calmly. It was not for him to judge the acts of the Civil Commissioners for Santo



PROCLAMATION.

Nous, Étienne POLVEREL & Léger-Felicité SONTHONAX, Commissaires Civils de la République, délégués aux Iles françaises de l'Amérique sous le vent, pour y rétablir l'ordre & la tranquillité publique.

Aux Citoyens Matelots, Canonniers & Soldats des bâtimens de la République.

Les Commissaires civils de la république savent que les généraux Galbaud, Cambis & Sercey vous ont égarés, qu'ils vous ont forcés d'être parjures à la République. Livrez-les aux mandataires de la France, aux délégués de la convention nationale, & vous êtes pardonnés.

Vous tous, bons Citoyens, venez autour de nous; que les factieux soient seuls; qu'ils partent; qu'ils aillent recevoir en France le prix de leurs forfaits!

Fait au Cap, le [illegible], l'an 2 de la république.

Par les commissaires civils de la république.

F. Polverel, Secrétaire de la commission civile.

AU CAP, DE L'IMPRIMERIE DE LA COMMISSION CIVILE DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE.

PROCLAMATION OF THE CIVIL COMMISSIONERS FOR FRENCH SANTO DOMINGO

To the sailors, gunners and soldiers of the French fleet at The Cape, on June 20, 1793, the morning of the massacre. Autographed by the Commissioners Polverel and Sonthonax. From the original in the Genet papers.

Domingo. Sonthonax and Polverel were the constituted authorities of the French Republic in the island; it was not necessary to go back of that. It would be for the Convention to decide. They had decreed the deportation of Galbaud, and that was sufficient. He must be sent back to France, in spite of his continuous attempts to slip ashore in America, and in spite of the sailors who were braying about not giving him up to his "enemies." Aside from that, it seemed to Genet that the Commissioners had been endeavoring to preserve the colony "in the midst of the most violent passions, the most absurd prejudices," and that by "their prudence and firmness" they were eliminating the evils that threatened it.

Genet, frankly, had no more patience than Sonthonax with the conniving royalist whites. The first sentiment inspired by those unfortunate refugees was naturally one of pity; all the American cities that had witnessed "the touching spectacle" of their arrival had rushed to succor them "with a blind enthusiasm;" committees had been formed, thousands of dollars subscribed, a mobile hospital established by Genet at Norfolk and another on the Governor's Island at New York. But they were a passionate, obstinate lot, Genet had found, imbued with the everlasting prejudice of the skin; and "their presence in the colony was consequently, and would still be, simply a danger," so that Genet was not allowing them to return. And worse than that, they were still actively conspiring with the English. Positive information, Genet advised Jefferson already on August 4, showed that "at this moment they are forming the odious project of assembling on the territory of the United States for the purpose of going to the support of their accomplices

who still dare to struggle against the [French] authorities [established] with the object of maintaining order and peace in Santo Domingo."

And that same prejudice of the skin left him cold. It was to be used against him in South Carolina—Santo Domingo, and Brissot, and the Society of the Friends of the Blacks—but it was not in Genet's French nature, unacquainted with the problem from any personal or domestic aspect, to be shocked by the National Assembly's decreed civic equality of the mulattoes. With the whites intriguing with England, the only way to save the colony, he was to come to believe, was to "let the revolution of color complete itself entirely." The men of color and the blacks were the only ones capable of defeating the British conspiracy, and that was at the root of the white hatred for them—that, and always the pride of skin. The National Assembly, as Genet saw it, had had two objects in granting citizenship to the mulattoes; to "consecrate in the colonies a principle of equality," and to "make sure, in the very heart of the islands, of a party capable of counterbalancing or crushing that of the [royalist] colonists." The machinations of the English faction were well known, and by placing themselves at the head of the men of color, the Commissioners were "not only following the path of law and justice, but also that of the interests of France."

As for the sailors, Genet was sorry for those poor devils. With them, he realized, the prejudice against the mulattoes was become a part of their being. The sailors were all right, "as long as no one speaks to them either of Santo Domingo, or of the Commissioners, or of the mulattoes, or of the blacks," for "their philosophy does not go as far as that."

And the Commissioners were wrong if they thought that the men who manned the fleet had been preparing to surrender it to the enemy. On the contrary, "by coming to recognize in me the authority of the Republic, by submitting themselves to my instructions . . . our sailors have proved that if their philosophy has limits their patriotism has none." They had been "blinded" by the whites, aroused by various regrettable incidents ashore, talked into it by Galbaud, and they had not seen that in fighting the blacks they were simply helping the royalists and the English.

And as for Galbaud himself, "he especially seems to me very much to blame . . . for having made use of this blindness of the sailors to satisfy a private resentment . . . for having made use of the hatred of the sailors in order to avenge a personal quarrel . . . for having caused the burning of the finest city in the French possessions across the seas, for having caused the slaughter of an immense population . . . for having jeopardized the safety of the whole colony of Santo Domingo by provoking the destruction of the town of The Cape which alone checked the progress of the revolted blacks"—and all that on account of a dispute with the Commissioners. France would shudder to think that Galbaud had taken the sailors ashore under such a pretext, to lead them against the delegates of the Republic.

5

They brought the fleet up from the Chesapeake—it was that squadron which arrived in New York just before the *Embuscade's* return from her battle with the *Boston*—Genet came himself, in the first week of August, and "the

darkest colors would only give you a feeble idea of the state of exhaustion . . . and unfortunately of dissension in which I found the squadron of the Republic. I am working night and day to supply its needs . . . to remove from the *Jupiter,* in order to send him to the bar of the Convention, the source of the ferment, the traitor or the imbecile Galbaud, and to completely republicanize our misled, grousing sailors, but good citizens at bottom and disposed to serve their country well"—provided no one mentioned Santo Domingo!

Mutiny; mutiny in the *Jupiter,* in the *Æolus,* spreading throughout the fleet; fomented by Galbaud who kept telling them that Genet was planning their destruction, that he intended to send them back to the Commissioners, that he, Galbaud, would be killed if they let him be taken ashore by the Citizen Minister. All sorts of wild yarns propagated through the fleet—that the Breton royalist insurrection in the Vendée was successful; that Brest had been burned; that the Austrians held the French frontiers; that "one must no longer count on the existence of the Republic." The authority of Cambis set aside, his crews refusing to hear a word from him; the sailors and soldiers "recognizing no commander, obeying no orders, spreading through the town and causing scandals." A perfect bedlam, in the midst of which Genet went from frigate to frigate, posting up official news on the mainmasts, haranguing the men, policing the anchorage as much as possible with the help of the port authorities.

One must see it all; the heat, the flies, the plague, death in the streets and treachery on the water; the public disgrace, and riot, and uproar; the summer going by and nothing done, Canada, Louisiana, all those enterprises hanging

by a thread and no ships, no money; troubles with privateers and consuls; the *Concorde* at Boston, and Noailles in a fury at Philadelphia over an article published by Bache, on the say-so of one of the legation secretaries, calling him a swindler; a story loose, now, certified by Jay and King, about an appeal to the people—the thing had been waiting for Genet at New York to greet him, for that had been Hamilton's contribution, to ruin him with the people—everything at once, and those idiotic sailors tramping up and down, parading from ship to ship, bellowing for this, and that, and the other. And Galbaud playing the martyr, writing about the consolations of innocence and begging money to pay for his laundry—a lot of nonsense—and Madame Galbaud weeping around on deck, striking attitudes in front of the sailors. And the Custom House asking for the payment of tonnage dues on the refugeed merchantmen—as though anyone had time to think about that.

One little sanity in all this madness, a gentle voice to silence the fracas, a serene face to blot out the scowling mugs of angry seamen—a girl at the Governor's House, the Governor's daughter, Cornelia Tappen Clinton.

They worked like beavers, Hauterive, the admirals, Pascal, Genet. A court naval on August 16; Cambis would resign of his own accord, Bompard of the *Embuscade* would take over the *Jupiter* with his crew—she must have been pretty badly damaged by the *Boston,* the *Embuscade*—Galbaud to France in the *Normande,* the disaffected sailors and soldiers ashore to be reorganized. Some of them might serve in the volunteer corps from the fleet which Genet was assembling to be sent to Santo Domingo; the Volunteers of the American Squadron—only some fool at Philadelphia

was calling it "Genet's Legion," and the name "does great harm to the Minister in the minds of many American democrats." But aboard the *Æolus* when the findings were read, the crew refused to listen, and yelled to go to France, "only to France," and talked hotly to Sercey until he threatened to resign himself. And aboard the *Jupiter* they had clapped Cambis into his cabin, calling him briny nautical names, and were preparing to fire on the committee sent to read the minutes. Genet admitted that he was in "the most cruel of situations."

A second court confirmed the first, while Genet saw himself swamped with blood manifestoes from the crew of the *Jupiter,* one of them in the handwriting of Galbaud's aide. They were going to France, right away—and Madame Galbaud was ashore buying provisions, saying the same thing—but Genet was convinced that if the frigate sailed she would let herself be taken by the English. And when the orders of the court were finally read to the frigate, a certain Bonne, corporal, made so many insulting remarks about them that Cambis broke out of his cabin to remonstrate, only to be pushed back into it again with bayonets. Galbaud! Galbaud! "One must have witnessed this spectacle," Genet observed, "in order to believe the extent to which Galbaud had aroused the majority of the crew with his agents, with money . . . [and] with the wine which he gave them for the asking."

It was now the fourth week in August. Genet issued a proclamation against Galbaud, and they tried the great court aboard the *Æolus,* with deputations present from all ranks throughout the fleet. And now at last some of the *Jupiter's* men began to waver, and they all came like good

children to beg Sercey's pardon; but "the *Citoyenne* Galbaud having come weeping on deck to reproach the sailors for abandoning her husband . . . and having reminded them of an alleged oath which they had sworn to protect him always," those honest souls refused to budge again, and got magnificently drunk instead. But Genet was not entirely discouraged. The men had showed signs of coming around, and above all he wished to avoid violence. "The idea," he wrote, "of arming patriotic Frenchmen against other [patriotic] Frenchmen . . . whose only crime was to have been misled, always revolts me."

They went on arguing back and forth, and finally, on August 28, Genet did at least obtain the release of Cambis. And now there was more commotion than ever, for the Admiral said something to Genet which set everybody running—to the Governor's for warrants, to the constables, and then all in a rush to a house in New York. And the bird had flown, but his papers were there.

6

It was a man called Tanguy La Boissière, a journalist of Santo Domingo, deported by the Commissioners for being a "perturber," and escaped from the fleet in New York harbor, which made a deserter of him, amenable to American arrest under the French treaty.

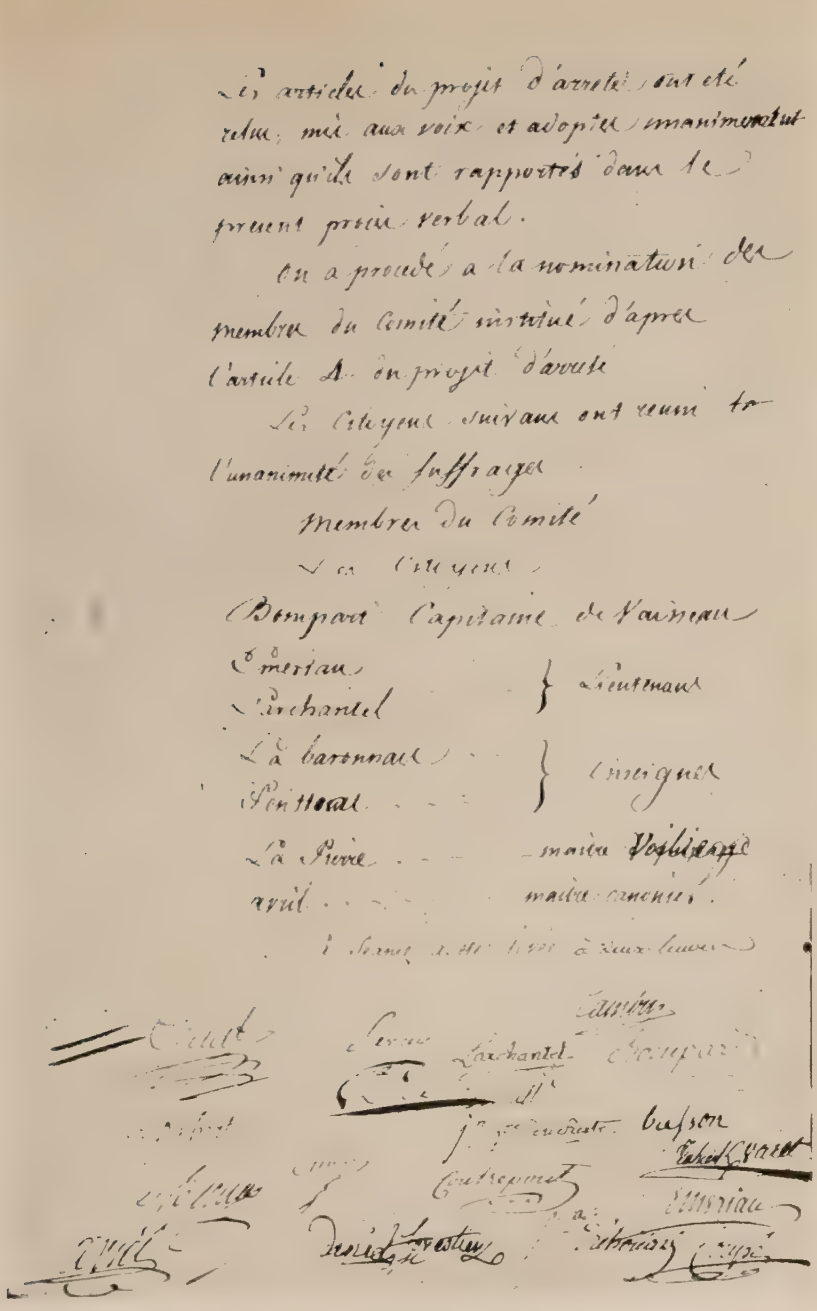
And his papers were something to read. All about Galbaud. A letter to the General at The Cape advising him to go with the troops and prevent the return of the Commissioners. An account of Galbaud's interview with Polverel and Sonthonax, from which it appeared that he had

called on *them* to resign on account of their enforcement of the mulatto law. Appeals to the crew of the *Jupiter* to support him. Drafts of all the manifestoes received from the sailors by Genet, and of all the inflammatory letters distributed in the fleet. The "most criminal correspondence" between Galbaud, various members of the fleet and an individual who had been sent from Santo Domingo to Jamaica to solicit English intervention. Information concerning a scheme which was being concerted in New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore for an expedition of royalist colonists to wage war on the blacks.

And a magnificent propaganda document stating that while Galbaud and his family were starving aboard the *Jupiter,* Genet was giving "orgies" ashore and paying people to "sing his praises" in the taverns; and accusing the Citizen Minister of having rented the Governor's Island, and put up a hospital there, so that he might have a place free from American jurisdiction in which to intern white refugees and "assassinate" the sick by depriving them of medicaments. No doctors, it seemed, would visit that "—— hospital" in which the extermination of the white race had been decreed.

So much for Galbaud. Genet put the papers under seals for France, and from that moment "I did not doubt that by making these papers known to the crews, and especially by informing them of the plan . . . to ally them with the Spaniards and the English in order to take Santo Domingo, one would be able to disgust them with those who had so perfidiously deceived them, and particularly with their leader Galbaud."

But it was not to be necessary to tell the crews anything. Galbaud had been told about the seizure of the



FINDINGS OF GENET'S COURT NAVAL

Enquiring into the mutiny of the French fleet in New York harbor, August, 1793. Showing the signatures of Genet, Captain Bompard of the *Embuscade*, and Admirals Sercey and Cambis. Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the Genet papers.

Tanguy papers—he was in touch all the time with English agents ashore—and on the evening of August 29 the loyal watch officer of the *Jupiter* was smelling a rat, and arranging signals with the *Æolus*. And at half past ten he went into Galbaud's cabin and "what was my surprise" to find two Americans there. Galbaud insisted that they were taking a letter for him to his wife—Madame Galbaud and the rest of the family were no longer aboard the frigate—but the watch officer remarked that "this was no time to be writing to one's wife," and put the Americans off the ship. Galbaud was in a fury, abusing the watch officer, and in the excitement on deck the General and several persons got into a skiff to row away. The *Jupiter's* other boats had been cut adrift, of course, but the *Æolus* heard the bell ringing and sent her own boats after the fugitives.

They were brought back, and now Conscience, the aide, piped the crew aft and harangued them. Galbaud must be saved from the Commissioners; he must be allowed to escape. Before anyone really knew it, in a general tolling of bells and commotion, Galbaud was gone again, with Conscience, Bonne the corporal, and three sailors.

Some malcontents went ashore the next day, and invaded the consulate, where one of them actually slashed at Cambis with a cutlass; and about ninety irreconcilables took the road for Philadelphia. They had been told, or they thought that they had been told, that Galbaud was to join them there and lead them triumphantly somewhere or other. This rabble was met by "several detachments of infantry and cavalry" and "four cannons" provided by the authorities of Philadelphia, hauled before Justice McKean and thrown into prison. It was an agitated day, and many of the sailors

laughed at all this military display and made rude remarks to the Justice, and "the aristocrats tremble." A tough looking lot, most of them "brutes," brawling their way into the city, and the citizens very much disturbed; but the militia were there, the Blues, no doubt, and the City Troop.

Otherwise, in New York, the mutiny was over. Bompard took command of the *Jupiter,* and Genet could write that "I have discovered everything, prevented everything. I have enlightened our misled crews. I have electrified their patriotism. . . . I have reorganized all branches of the service, removed the vile adherents of the royalist Galbaud, and now the squadron of the Republic presents only the most agreeable picture of order and obedience."

One could breathe a little—if one dared to breathe at all in the pestilential streets.

7

They got right after Galbaud; more warrants from the Governor, and some constables with Captain Prêty of the French military police rolling out of New York behind four horses on the evening of August 30. It was easy to trace the Galbaud party—the General, Conscience, two ladies, three children, Bonne and the sailors, in two carriages—up into West Chester, on the Albany road to Canada.

Late at night the constables had them cornered in a country inn, but the order for the arrest had been stupidly dated ahead, September 1, and the local authorities refused to comply. The Galbaud people threatened armed resistance—he was surrounded, then already, by English sympathizers and "Tories"—and Prêty sent for more constables. August 31 passed in riotous harangues and bribery, and in

the confusion of a very dark night Galbaud slipped away in borrowed clothes with his men, leaving the women and children behind. Prêty made sure of the ladies, and "the others aren't far away; they are hidden in the neighborhood," and Prêty had spies on every road.

The days and nights went by in a continuous turmoil—Prêty's spies playing hide and seek always with Galbaud's agents—and "the Galbaud partisans are strong in this parish, but I should worry myself about that." As for Madame Galbaud, she had "tried to touch my heart with her tears and her beautiful persuasions," and she was always posturing in front of Prêty in those attitudes "which she considers to be the most advantageous to her." Finally, on September 9, "Galbaud is betrayed to us by the very persons who saved him." Prêty was preparing an ambush, and Genet must send money and "dragoons" quickly. And he did—five dragoons and sixty dollars—but Galbaud got away with Conscience and Bonne. Clear away to Canada.

And in Canada, in October, they gave themselves up as prisoners of war and were sent on parole to Quebec. But at Montreal they began to use "improper" language, they were found to be "tampering" with the Indians, and the English ordered them to sail to Europe. For Governor Lord Dorchester had the idea that "Galbaud's pretended quarrel with Genet was made use of to further the latter's intrigues in the Province." But Galbaud did not sail to Europe; he left Bonne behind, and with Conscience broke his parole and fled again to America. In December he was back in New York sheltered by his "Tory" friends, defying everybody, shouting for a trial in the local courts, threatening to sue Genet, filling the gazettes with the clamor of his

partisans and even leading "outrageous" processions into the French consulate.

And Genet thought that the English had probably sent him to New York to foment new troubles; but at last, on Christmas Eve, "since the English have scorned in you [Galbaud], as in Dumouriez your friend and patron, the traitor from whose treachery they had profited, the Consul of the Republic will indicate to you a vessel aboard of which you will be received and taken to France—where you would have been long since except for your absurd rebellion, capped by your cowardly desertion."

Genet had found the right word, perhaps—from the Cape to West Chester, and up to Canada and back, the whole affair had been a fantastic, delirious absurdity. Only at The Cape, as a result of it, there was nothing but desolation, and at Jérémie and the *Mole* the English from Jamaica were already entrenched.

8

Genet had flamed up. He was harassed by other unexpected disasters—the appeal to the people was roaring around his head, and by the middle of September he was aware of some of those letters at sea—and the discovery of the Tanguy papers followed by the news of the English invasion of Santo Domingo brought him to a straining tension of excitement.

"I have just discovered the most atrocious conspiracy," he notified Jefferson, "which has ever been formed against the success of the armies of the French Republic. I have just discovered all the threads and all the proofs of the infernal web which . . . kept the French squadron in these

harbors in a state of nullity; of that web which threatened not only the security of our ships, but also that of our colonial possessions. The traitors Galbaud, Tanguy and other scoundrels, not content with having caused the spilling in Santo Domingo of the blood of a large population, not content with having caused to the Republic the loss of one *milliard,* were planning here, at Baltimore and at Philadelphia to make our forces contribute to the awful design . . . of returning to Santo Domingo in order to renew there the horrors and evils which they had already produced." The success of this plan "was founded on . . . the alliance which they proposed to enter into with . . . England and Spain" —the thing had actually been all signed in Jamaica— "[and] France . . . hopes, in the case of a friendly and allied Government, that it will be sufficient to denounce the plots which are being formed against her . . . in order to obtain from that Government all the necessary actions to defeat them."

Mass meetings of the refugeed colonists were being held; expeditions were forming against French Santo Domingo in the American ports, "without experiencing any of those contradictions, those obstacles which have never ceased to hinder the zeal of the agents of the [French] Republic"— the Louisiana and *Petite Démocrate* shoe was now pinching the other foot, of course; but these were expeditions openly organized within the territory of the United States by conspirators against the French authority in alliance with the enemies of France, and Genet could still with propriety invoke the treaties—consuls were being mobbed in the streets; Genet himself was being scurrilously attacked in the gazettes by royalist propaganda, and "in France, where our citizens

may censure all the acts of the Government, foreign Ministers are respected."

At Philadelphia the "tricolor deputation" from Santo Domingo—a white, a mulatto and a negro deputy on their way to France, where they were to be kissed by the President of the Convention—had been attacked and "scandalously insulted," and papers containing further proof of Galbaud's guilt stolen from them—and "the unhappy men whom a blind rage led to this attack no doubt were ignorant of the fact that four hundred thousand blacks had sworn to avenge on the white race still remaining in [Santo Domingo] any affront which their representatives might receive at the hands of white men." And Genet had pacified the deputies, and made them promise not to report the affair to Santo Domingo; but "the new people forming in that island can become a useful friend or a dangerous neighbor" to America, and it would be well to take steps in concert with France regarding that situation, "dictated . . . by philosophy and the empire of circumstances."

The State Department did what it could, but Genet was scarcely satisfied. He wanted all these shiploads of royalist colonists arrested; he wondered if the French frigates might not be allowed to "detain" all American vessels not provided with passports from him, in order to "prevent the landing of enemies who might escape your vigilance"; he thought that America should curtail the disaffected immigration from Santo Domingo. "No doubt I have no right to demand repressive measures against them," he wrote, but "it seems to me indispensable, as much for your tranquillity as for the interest of France, that the Federal Government should take in its wisdom prompt steps to bring to naught

the plots which I have . . . denounced . . . and to prevent . . . that the soil of liberty should be defiled by the lava which the volcano of Santo Domingo has cast upon it, and which can only spread over it the poison of aristocracy and royalism."

Why "do these dangerous men select the territory of liberty if not to compromise it and conspire against it? If they do not fortify your commerce and your agriculture, if the only thing they can do is to vitiate your moral and political existence . . . why should they not in future be sent to the possessions of those kings . . . whose slaves they avow themselves to be? Spain offers them the effete life of its cities; English conceit opens its arms to them; they have at their doors companions in slavery and rivals in barbarity, and [yet] it is here that they place their liberticidal and corrupting feet!"

And when Jefferson objected that many of these demands were out of the question, Genet replied that "I know that your country is open to all men provided they come and go peaceably; and I did not propose to you at all . . . that you should expel the numerous aristocrats who have introduced themselves into your country." He had only suggested, "rather as a friend of liberty than as a Public Minister, that it might be useful . . . to restrict the prodigious importation of royalists, of aristocrats, which has been occurring for some time, and who bring here only their insignificance, their conceit and their hatred for the Popular Government. I never asked you either to prevent the departure of . . . refugees [wishing to return to the loyal section], but I asked you, Sir, to prevent the Baltimore expedition . . . bound for two rebellious localities which have

been base enough to surrender themselves to the English. . . . I leave it to you, Sir, whether treachery has any such rights to the favors of your neutrality, and whether diffidence and politics shall permit your citizens to go and supply the rebels of Jérémie and the *Mole*?"

It was "no longer the good offices of an ally which France is obliged to demand of the Federal Government, but . . . that you will not assist in destroying us that I am obliged to beg you; it is to beg you not to conspire in the loss of a colony which you should have defended that I limit my sad duty." Genet, in the past, had merely "given in" to certain provisional acts of the American Government with regard to its treaties; acts which, "under an apparent moderation, conceal a manifest contradiction, admitting an inability to defend us," and yet claiming "the right to allow us to be attacked." He had not "aspired to drag you into war"—the statement was of necessity uncandid—but he had with "moderation," so he thought, "recalled to you the obligations incumbent upon you." Among them, to guarantee the integrity of the French possessions in America.

But "the Colossus of the French People arises majestically and causes all his enemies to tremble," in the midst of "great reverses, of brilliant victories and of atrocious conspiracies." There "is the friend under whose wing America will brave the despots who distribute their hatred between us. It is this friend who, in the midst of rigorous general measures made necessary by circumstances, never for a moment ceases to remember you and exempt you from them; her demands which I make to you in her name, Sir, limit themselves to a request that you will not permit to be forged upon your territory daggers intended to assassinate her."

9

But in the meantime the Custom House was not exempting France from any of its routine rigors. It was still requiring its pound of flesh in tonnage dues from the refugee merchantmen, although their cargoes were not destined for America, and Genet was furious.

It was true that some of their goods had been unloaded for sale, so that funds might be obtainable for revictualling the ships, but this was permitted by the treaty which allowed that privilege, free from all duties, to all friendly vessels forced into American harbors by stress of weather or any other urgent necessity. And when Hamilton refused to remit the dues, claiming that the French convoy from Santo Domingo did not constitute such a category of shipping, Genet simply saw red. "A small share," he told Jefferson, "of that benevolent gratitude which without doubt constitutes the characteristic of a people that aspires to the renown of morality, will be sufficient to insure the success of [the French captains'] claims."

Hamilton "would do well to peruse once more this article [in the treaty] of the laws of his country," and "those who in the levying of duties see nothing but the means of making money do not raise their minds to the elevated views of the laws of Congress, but entertain sentiments injurious to legislation and rate money at too high a value." Those vessels had been "forced out of their course, they sailed precipitately from the port of their departure; they arrived here in a shattered condition, their rigging being greatly damaged, without papers, without provisions, without water, forced to put in here at a vast expense. They acquit the

duties of hospitality by the consumption of provisions, by the sale of merchandise the proceeds from which are necessary for [repairs and supplies]. Those who take advantage of other peoples' distress to enrich themselves have had sufficient means of profiting by our distress."

Genet was excited, and the seizure of Jérémie and the *Mole* by the English distracted him. His pen went flying.

These royalist refugees, these Galbauds and Tanguys, "inhabiting all your maritime cities, they are doing their best there to pervert public opinion, directing it towards their royalist system; they ally themselves with the *émigrés,* with the agents of the heretofore French Princes, with the English, proclaim themselves aloud to be subjects of the latter or of the pretended Louis XVII; they swell the numbers of that portion of [the English] nation which has not yet given up the hope of conquering you, and make themselves the most active instruments of the system of universal domination over all the American establishments to which that audacious Power aspires."

It was time that France was "avenged of the insults of those perverted *émigrés,* rejected by the whole world." It was time that America "put into effect laws passed by your Legislators to prevent the intrusion of the foreign *émigrés* from becoming a burden on society; for soon those patriots of 1776 will be nothing at all in the country which they created, the tree of Liberty whose roots were watered by their blood will cover with its shade only their most cruel enemies. Close your doors to all those vile men who come to you to rejoice in the benefits of a régime which they have betrayed in their own country, and which they will likewise betray here when accumulating events shall have put you to the

necessity of taking part in the struggle of Liberty and Tyranny."

For the day was coming. England and Spain were preparing to crush America; the French West Indies first, and then America. Uphold the sanctity of treaties and stand at France's side against England, for "you have only two alternatives left—that you will bend under the weight of your former chains, pass humbly under the Caudine Forks which the Kings of England and Spain prepare for you, throw yourselves into the liberticidal arms of those political vampires at the cost of your honor—or else, if the spirit of 1776 has not yet fled from this country, that you will inform your ruler that it is time for him to rise with majesty; that it is time for your young men to go to your arsenals and take up the weapons which their fathers deposited there along with their imperishable laurels, in order to defend with France if necessary the liberty and independence of nations, the happiness of mankind."

In Canada, in Illinois, in New Orleans, they were "only awaiting the moment when the Americans shall adopt an attitude worthy of a free people to unite themselves to them and consecrate this vast continent to the cult of the Divinity which will soon rule over the whole world. Proclamations . . . have advised them of the intentions of France, reliable agents have spread them among them, and one can say with certainty that if on the frontiers set down by their tyrants they were to see appear the nineteen American stars joined to the tricolor of [France], their chains would be broken, England and Spain punished and humanity avenged."

Fine, stirring stuff, for he knew how to fling the sentences out—the ballyhoo of diplomacy, good in 1793, good

also with the names changed in 1917—and "forgive, Sir, the indignation which oppresses me, the love of my country which isolates me perhaps from sensibility, but the time for temporizing no longer exists. The régime of Liberty calls for men, as in Sparta one excludes from it everything which does not promise to be manly."

But he ought to have known by this time that it was not Jefferson who would ever send the youth of America forth with their shields.

And he ought to have known what they knew in England, what Hammond was writing to Grenville. That Noailles was rendering him very valuable services; that the French royalist envoy was sharing with the English whatever knowledge he acquired of Genet's plans; that it was partly through his, Noailles's, efforts that the French fleet had been disorganized.

CHAPTER VI

THE CERTIFICATE MEN

1

"I AM going to New York," Genet had announced on August 2, "and the whole town will come out to meet me. Since I landed on this continent, there has not been a day that I have not received similar proofs of the love of this people here for our country, but my zeal will only be satisfied when I shall have profited from it. The whole of the New World must be free, and America must help us in this sublime design."

He was going primarily because the French fleet was there; because the citizens of New York had often invited him; and because the British Minister had suddenly gone there, and Genet wished to be on the spot to counteract any possible intrigue concerning his disaffected sailors. But he did not know that John Jay and Rufus King had preceded him to New York, and that a rumor had already preceded them, and that he was to be called upon to counteract something much more dangerous than Minister Hammond's alleged machinations, or Galbaud's connivances, or the calamities of the plague.

A rumor that the French Minister had threatened to

appeal to the people. And when Jay and King were asked if it was so, they replied that it was. And "to many a declaration so extraordinary did not appear probable, and our having asserted it to be true was questioned." They were being laughed at in public meetings, and in the gazettes articles were appearing calling on them to admit or deny. Tongues were wagging, and pens scratching.

Genet made a pleasant trip of it from Philadelphia; crowds out all along the route, in some towns the militia twelve hours under arms expecting him, a deputation of citizens to meet him on August 7 three miles beyond Paulus Hook. He crossed over to the Battery in a boat decorated with French and American flags, and was greeted at a special landing by a great concourse of people. Again the guns and bells of April and May. They took him to a reception at the New Coffee House where he replied to the fiery address of welcome. France had preferred, he told them, to enjoy, "the spectacle of your prosperity and [to call] on you to partake of all the riches of her commerce to involving you with her in a common danger"—a little flimflam for the merchants—"Still, she expects from you a faithful and punctual observance of [the] treaties," and the American Government "must know that the strict performance of treaties is the best and safest policy. They must know that good faith alone can assure respectability to a nation, that a pusillanimous conduct provokes insolence and brings upon a country those very dangers which it weakly means to avert."

And there in so many words, as a matter of fact, was an appeal to the people, and received with loud republican cheers. They escorted him, then, to the house prepared for

him on Maiden Lane; he visited Governor Clinton—and it was at that moment perhaps that he first saw Cornelia—and late in the afternoon he was back in his rooms, closeted with the French admirals.

And on August 12, in the *Diary or Loudon's Register,* there was a "certificate" signed by Jay and King, stating that "certain late publications render it proper for us to authorize you to inform the public that a report having reached this city from Philadelphia that . . . the French Minister had said he would appeal to the people from certain decisions of the President, we were asked on our return from that place whether he had made such a declaration—we answered that he had, and we also mentioned it to others, authorizing them to say that we had so informed them."

Someone went running around right away to Maiden Lane with the paper.

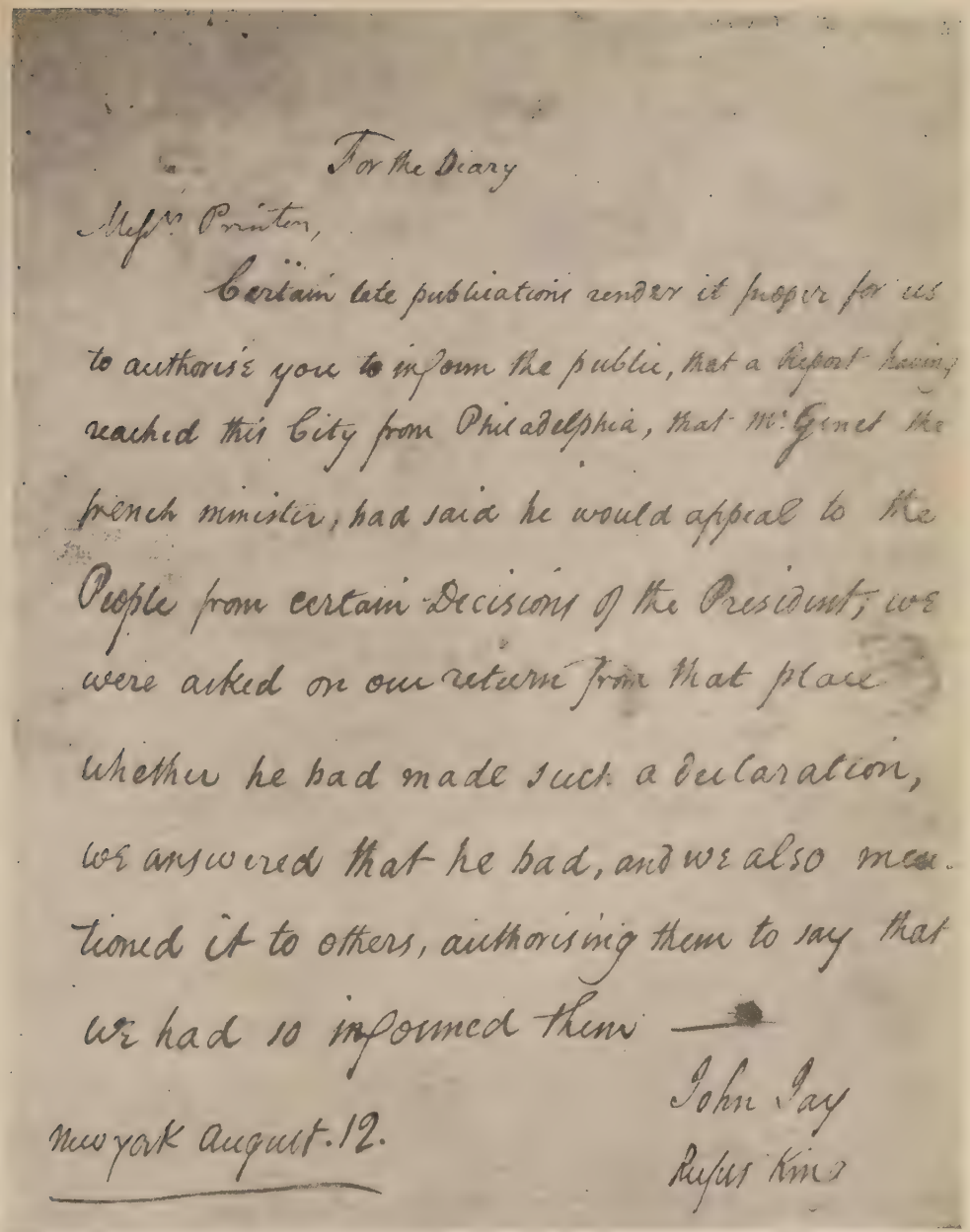
2

They must already have sent a request for additional information to Hamilton, the "certificate men"—it was Genet's name for them—because on August 13 Hamilton was writing to tell them the "facts" which they might print. Dallas had told Mifflin, Mifflin had told Knox, Dallas had also told Jefferson. That "Mr. Genet . . . had declared [to Dallas] that he would appeal from the President to the people." And "I give you this detail that you may have the whole subject before you, but I cannot authorize you to make use of it all." For instance, "it is true (as you have heard) that things if possible still more insulting have since been done by Mr. Genet, but of this at present no use can be made." *Things if possible still more insulting*—Hamil-

ton was at it with his insinuations; just as in 1800 and in 1804 he was to be at it concerning Aaron Burr, until one sentence too many of that sort sent him to Weehawken to face the Colonel's duelling pistol.

And in 1793 he was coaching Jay and King. In a public article written later, they gave the story of the Dallas and Jefferson interviews with Genet, stating that they had "had no desire or intentions to come forward as the prosecutors of the French Minister before the tribunal of the public," nor had they deemed it "necessary to detail and explain the evidence on which we rested our assertion;" but "for the truth and accuracy" of their account they now referred to Hamilton and Knox, "from whom we derived the information on which we relied." And Hamilton and Knox came forward—this was in December—and certified that "we did severally communicate to . . . John Jay and Rufus King the particulars contained in [their] statement. That [the particulars reported by Dallas to Mifflin] were communicated by [Mifflin] to each of us. . . . That such of them as respect Mr. Jefferson, including the information to him from Mr. Dallas . . . were communicated to us by Mr. Jefferson."

So, eventually, all the names were out, and the genealogy of the allegation established. Genet to Dallas; Dallas to Mifflin and Jefferson; Mifflin and Jefferson to Hamilton and Knox; Hamilton and Knox to Jay and King; Jay and King to the American public. A good many tongues repeating the story, and all of it depending on Dallas. That Jefferson seized upon the story as a means of discrediting before the Cabinet the French Minister whom he had determined for political reasons to abandon is incontestable;



For the Diary

Messrs Printers,

Certain late publications render it proper for us to authorise you to inform the public, that a Report having reached this City from Philadelphia, that Mr Genet the french minister, had said he would appeal to the People from certain Decisions of the President; we were asked on our return from that place whether he had made such a Declaration, we answered that he had, and we also mentioned it to others, authorising them to say that we had so informed them —

John Jay
Rufus King

New york August. 12.

THE CERTIFICATE OF JAY AND KING

The printer's copy, in King's handwriting. Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the possession of the Library of Congress.

that Hamilton should seize upon Jefferson's report as a means of damaging the whole Jeffersonian French cause before the nation was to be expected; that Jay and King were chosen to handle the chestnuts for Hamilton is obvious.

And now it seems important, before any further discussion of this curious affair, immediately to record the conviction that Jay and King had acted in perfectly good faith; that the same was true, as to their understanding of the facts, of Hamilton and Knox; and that it was also true, owing to their *misunderstanding* of the facts, of Jefferson and Mifflin. One does not presume to accuse them of willful invention. Jefferson himself maintained that he had made his report to the President "with a sacred regard to truth," and that he was ready to publish it "without the suppression of a tittle of it." He must have reported what he believed that he had heard from Dallas.

And that was awkward—for all these gentlemen—because Dallas was flatly to deny ever having said any such thing.

3

Genet was at first inclined to laugh. "That fable" certified to by Jay and King, he afterwards told Jefferson. "I laughed at it and did not think that it merited any other reply." Although at that—to his own Ministry—"this weak Government which is always afraid of England deserves such an appeal."

But his friends were anxious, and he soon began to see that "this imposture might have deep roots." It looked to him like a Federalist intrigue in order to damage the Franco-American alliance and pave the way for an Anglo-American

understanding—and Jay's mission to England in 1794 for that very purpose was not to weaken his conviction. And he recalled his financial conference with Hamilton in which the latter had insisted that the French treaties were not applicable because France was the aggressor in her war with England; for one thing, Hamilton had said, because the French Convention had threatened an appeal to the British people. The similarity of that method of reasoning to the Jay-King procedure struck Genet as curious—and it is curious, as well as Jefferson's hints to Monroe of an intended appeal prior to the Dallas conversation. The idea of a French diplomatic appeal to the people was in Jefferson's mind, and in Hamilton's, before the famous midnight interview had ever taken place.

Once he had satisfied himself of the danger, Genet did not waste a moment. Not he. On August 13 he wrote, and later published, a peremptory letter to the President. The Empress of Russia, or the President of the United States, Genet was never tongue-tied. "To you alone, through the Secretary of State," he announced, "have I complained of the principles you have adopted, and remonstrated against decisions which have resulted therefrom. To you alone have I declared that the Federal Government . . . were sacrificing our interests to those of our enemies, by their interpretation of the treaties. . . . To you have I presented without reserve, that this conduct did not appear to correspond with the views of the [American] people, with their desire to observe with fidelity their public engagements"—and the Federalists, and Jefferson too, could bite their nails, for here *was* an appeal to the people with a vengeance, precipitated by their own actions.

Now, Genet went on, certain persons, "actuated by views which time will develop . . . publish . . . that I have insulted you, and that I have threatened you with an appeal to the people; as if you would permit anyone . . . to treat you with disrespect, or as if the slightest hint of an appeal, which a magistrate deserving of his high office should ardently desire, was to you the greatest offense I could offer. It has become necessary, Sir, to dissipate these dark calumnies by truth and publicity. I dare therefore to expect from your candor and probity an explicit declaration that I have never intimated to you an intention of appealing to the people; that it is not true that [I have ever forgotten] what was due to your character [or] reputation. . . . A publication of your answer will be the only reply which shall be given to those party men." And "a good cause needs no advocate —time and truth will make it triumph; and ours must triumph in spite of its implacable enemies, and the present cold indifference of some who were its ancient friends."

It was a magnificent letter to write, full of the most telling sarcasm, productive of the most intense satisfaction to the writer, no doubt—and it was insane. The sort of letter that should be destroyed immediately. To write to the President perhaps, but not in those terms. In all his diplomatic career, Genet never boiled over so completely as on this occasion. And Jefferson's historic reply was a prompt acid eating its way into every pore of Genet's folly. "The President . . . has received the letter . . . addressed to him," he answered on August 16—the letter to Morris asking for Genet's recall must have been at his elbow—"and I am desired to observe to you that it is not the established course for the diplomatic characters residing here to have

any direct correspondence with him. The Secretary of State is the organ through which their communications should pass. The President does not conceive it to be within the line of propriety or duty for him to bear evidence against a declaration which, whether made to him or others, is perhaps immaterial: he therefore declines interfering in the case."

Genet was angrier than ever—it was an "evasive" reply—but it was in the days of the Santo Domingo courts naval, and he had other things to do just then. And Jay and King thought that *his* letter was evasive. He denied having said certain things to the President but he left "the question whether he had made [the declaration] *at all* entirely out of sight," and the "true and only question [was] whether he had made such a declaration to *anybody*."

4

And that is still the true and only question, whether he had made such a declaration to anybody—to Dallas, since that was the precise accusation. And of course he had probably made some such declaration frequently. His drive from Charleston to Philadelphia had been an appeal to the people, every gesture from every balcony from which he had ever spoken had been an appeal to the people. Congress, the people—he assumed them to be synonymous, far more so than the President and the people. Every time that Jefferson advised him to wait for the new Congress, that was an implied appeal to the people; in every public address when he remarked on the sanctity of treaties, that was an actual appeal to the people; in his personal talk he must have expressed the thought on countless occasions. It was almost silly to make a fuss over any one individual

instance, when his whole procedure was a continuous appeal to the people.

He must have written of it to associates. He admitted it. He had written it to Dallas. The whole commotion, "the spoiled child of the Federal Government, that famous appeal to the people," as he once called it to a friend, had turned on "two words escaped from my pen and repeated by Dallas." There it was. One of any number of similar molehills, careless words *written* at some time to Dallas, with what context and in what mood one is not told. And out of that Jefferson, no doubt misinterpreting Dallas, made his mountain of a formal "threat," uttered on a definite occasion, *verbally,* as an official coercion to be applied in a specific dispute.

It was not sincere, this sudden concern of Jefferson's, as though his friend had never said anything of the sort before—Jefferson knew that he had, because Jefferson had already complained of it to Monroe, but Jefferson had not then shoved it under the President's nose. It was not candid, this pouncing upon Dallas's gossip to be served up all hot and enormous to the President without a word to Genet. It was neither sincere nor candid, because it was only intended to serve a timely purpose, to ruin Genet, behind his back, now that Jefferson was afraid of him. And unfortunately, as reported by Jefferson, the accusation was not true. It was a far cry from private explosions about Congress and the will of the people—no Frenchman of that day could help talking about the will of the people—to a solemn threat to carry an immediate issue over the President's head to the nation. And this Genet had not done, and this Dallas denied ever having said that he had done.

And Monroe saw it coming. "I find," he was to notify Jefferson, "the establishment of the charge against Mr. Genet will depend principally upon what you heard Mr. Dallas say. This latter will deny that he ever said anything like what the certificate states. Jay and King heard it from Hamilton and Knox and these latter from Mifflin, and I am told that there is a difference between those gentlemen and Mifflin"—where surely no difference should have been —"and likewise between him and Dallas, as to what they respectively stated. So that the fact will be disproved against them unless the circumstances they are able to adduce are supported by you."

But of them all, it was the "certificate men" who were in the worst fix. And one of them Chief Justice of the United States.

5

The affair roared through the gazettes and pamphlets, along with all the other French excitements of that disjointed summer. It was a dastardly impertinence, and "Genet is too abhorred a villain to have his name mentioned by any man of the least honor or virtue"—but there was a young lady at New York, a young lady of impeccable honor and virtue, who did not think so. It was a Federalist plot to ruin France, a "craftily contrived lie," and Jay, King, Knox and Hamilton were a pack of scoundrels. "Well pushed, great, honest and able patriots! The first of ye shall be crowned, and henceforth called K . . g J . y [King Jay], prince of the Jesuits!" It was a "serious and alarming measure," a proceeding "unprecedented and unpermitted in every well policed state." It was all nonsense;

a distortion of words probably, an utterance that would depend on its context and tone for its meaning.

The Federalists began collecting affidavits of all kinds. Noah Webster had dined with Genet, Bompard, Pascal and several other gentlemen. The consular uproar in Boston had been mentioned, and Genet and Bompard had agreed with Pascal when he remarked that "Mr. Washington makes war on the French nation." Genet had added that the Executive of the United States was under the influence of British gold. Was he referring to the President, Webster had asked. No, but the officers of the Government "were in the British interest, or words to that effect, and . . . a plan was formed to subject [America] to Great Britain, and [America] should soon be the [slave] of that kingdom." Genet had "very good letters" to prove it. Did he think the Cabinet were fools, Webster had then enquired, and Genet had replied that "Mr. Jefferson is no fool." Webster to Wolcott, Wolcott to Hamilton, Hamilton to Washington.

The letters and resolutions came pouring in. Resolutions of respect and sympathy for the President; resolutions of support—from Richmond, from Philadelphia, from New York State—for Genet. Moultrie, at Charleston, was worried, hoping that Genet's "good sense could not permit you to behave with the least impropriety to the President," and Genet assured him of the "absurdity" of the accusation and of his intention to address himself to Congress, through the medium of the Executive, "to ask the severest examination of all my official measures." At Boston, Citizen Nancrède found many friends, and much favorable comment concerning Genet's "firmness and courage" expressed

by the members of Congress whom he met at the Governor's. Hancock said "that he had shared your troubles [and] that he demands your triumph."

Mangourit reported that "people never stop occupying themselves here with you and the President. This appeal to the people . . . turns loose all the political clatterwhacking on the two of you. The English, the American and the Spanish aristocrats are a good deal like bull frogs with their bellowing. They all say in chorus 'He must be recalled, and his lever in the Southern States [Mangourit] . . . what is the use of having these republican democrats in a royal republic?'"

Everybody was writing. It was the season of Madison's *Helvidius* and Hamilton's *Pacificus* and *No Jacobin,* and the French and British factions bellowed lustily throughout the land, while the privateers swarmed, and the consuls raved, and the sailors cheered for Galbaud. America was a mad house. The Federalists fumed and the Republicans howled, and the pest carts went rolling by. Guns and bells again—the guns and bells of death. Genet smashed his mutiny, and clung to his treaties, and cramped his hand with pens. Fortunately he was in love, and life was worth living, in spite of the bedlam, the fearful toil and strain of his lonely battle under the guttering candles. He had lost his heart, and sometimes he lost his head. And on the Atlantic there were those letters that he was to see along in September.

And Madison was telling Monroe that Genet's conduct "has been that of a madman. He is abandoned even by his votaries in Philadelphia." And Monroe was deciding that "the monarchy party among us has seized a new ground whereon to advance their fortunes. The French Minister has been guilty in the vehemence of his zeal of some indis-

Sir Philadelphia Aug. 16. 1793.

The President of the U.S. has received the letter which you addressed to him from New York on the 13th instant and I am desired to observe to you that it is not the established course for the diplomatic characters residing here to have any direct correspondence with him. The Secretary of State is the organ thro' which their communications should pass.

The President does not conceive it to be within the line of promptness or duty for him to bear evidence against a declaration which whether made to him or others, is perhaps immaterial. He therefore declines interfering in the case.

I have the honor to be with great respect, Sir

Your most obed.t

& most humble serv.t

Th. Jefferson

The Minister Plenipotentiary of the republic of France

JEFFERSON TO GENET

Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the Genet papers.

cretions, slighting the President . . . and instead of healing the breach this party have brought it to the public view and are laboring to turn the popularity of this respectable citizen against the French Revolution, thinking to separate us from France and pave the way for an unnatural connection with Great Britain." Just what Genet was thinking.

And to Jefferson, Monroe was saying that "the state into which the conduct of an indiscreet man on the one part and some very wicked men on the other has thrown us in respect to France fills me with extreme concern. . . . That the object of this party is to separate us from France and ultimately unite us with England is what I am well assured of—and that the certificate of Messrs. Jay and King was concerted at Philadelphia as the means of bringing the subject before the public is likewise what I believe. . . . I consider the whole however as a mere trick and which will ultimately recoil on the authors of it."

And Messrs. Jay and King were beginning to wonder about that, for on November 14, with Galbaud out of the way, Genet was at last writing to Jefferson and to Randolph, the Attorney General, concerning a certain certificate which was "utterly and totally false"—a "public insult to my nation and to myself," a "perfidious imposture"—and requesting that the authors of the "libel" be "prosecuted at the Federal Court."

And on top of that Dallas now made himself heard.

6

He would now proceed, on December 9, in the Philadelphia *American Daily Advertiser,* to "declare the facts relative to Mr. Genet's conversation with me." Dallas then re-

lated the circumstances of the interview over the *Petite Démocrate;* Genet had "complained in strong terms, and with many angry epithets, of the ill-treatment that he had received from some of the officers of the general government, which he contrasted with the cordial attachment that was expressed by the people at large for his nation." He had "observed with considerable emphasis that the President was not the sovereign of the country . . . nor could he declare war or make peace;" Congress was "the only constituted body" that could interpret the treaties, and it was the "duty of the President . . . to have convened Congress." He had insisted that, although existing causes "would warrant an abrupt departure," he would remain until the assembling of Congress; he had spoken of publishing his correspondence with the Government, and "he said that if Congress agreed in the opinions . . . of the President . . . he would certainly then withdraw, conscious of having discharged his duty, and leave the dispute to be finally adjusted by the two nations themselves."

Such—with the warning that any attempt to seize the *Petite Démocrate* by force would be met with force—"was Mr. Genet's conversation with me: and it will be allowed that although I am responsible for the fidelity of the recital, I am not responsible for any inference which has been, or may be, drawn from the facts that it contains."

As for the reported appeal, "I find that [Mifflin] thinks" —*thinks*—"that I made use of the word 'appeal' . . . in this manner—'that if, after the business was laid before Congress, Mr. Genet did not receive satisfaction . . . he would publish his appeal, withdraw, and leave the Governments themselves to settle the dispute.' The word *appeal*

appears . . . to be more applicable to those facts which represent that Mr. Genet . . . declared a determination to address Congress . . . but . . . if it is not construed necessarily to import that I heard a declaration from Mr. Genet that he would appeal from the President to the people, I am content to admit the expression as mine."

But Dallas was "likewise apprised that [Jefferson] stated, in an official memorandum, that Mr. Genet's declaration of an intention to appeal . . . was not expressed to him but to me." And "whether Mr. Jefferson employed the language of his own inference from my recital . . . or adopted the language of the current rumor, I will not attempt to discuss; but if . . . I had also enjoyed the means of explanation, I . . . should then have said what I said the moment I heard the suggestion applied to me—what I have since taken every proper opportunity of saying, and what I now most solemnly say—that Mr. Genet never did, in his conversation with me, declare that he would appeal from the President to the people, or that he would make any other appeal which conveyed to my mind the idea of exciting insurrection and tumult."

And in closing, "as my communications to [Mifflin and Jefferson] were of an official and confidential nature, I think that I have cause to complain . . . that I was not personally consulted (which common courtesy, as well as common caution, might have dictated) before Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Knox (who had daily opportunities of seeing me) undertook to propagate the report connected with my name; or at least before Mr. Jay and Mr. King undertook to vouch for its authenticity. . . ."

And read that with your morning tea.

7

The "certificate men" were very much excited. They issued a renewed statement of their allegation; and King was enraged by Dallas's "apostasy." Dallas had come to New York to see Genet, months after the original interview which Jefferson had written down at the time, and "what had passed between the French Minister and Mr. Dallas is not revealed," but "Mr. Dallas in due time backs the Minister by his solemn declaration."

And Jay thought that "it is to be regretted that Mr. Jefferson and Governor Mifflin still remain as it were in a background." It might be useful to secure letters from Hamilton and Knox calling on the other two to come forward. Because "the evidence will not appear to be completed while Jefferson and Mifflin remain *silent,* or their silence is not accounted for." Dallas's affidavit was "artful," and the publication of Jefferson's report was "very advisable." In this case "the truth should shine, not behind a cloud however thin, but bright and with as few spots as possible." Other people thought the same. "Pray does not Mr. Jefferson mean to come forward shortly and confirm [the Hamilton-Knox] certificates?" And "we think a requisition ought to be made on [Jefferson and Mifflin] to come out fully and positively. Where is the official report which all here say and believe Mr. Jefferson made to the President stating the information as he had it at the time from Mr. Dallas?"

Precisely—but they had decided in the Cabinet not to publish it, and there were rumors that Hamilton and Knox, as well as Jefferson, were about to resign.

Genet thought that he saw his enemies on the run, and

pushed home. In a letter to Randolph, on December 16—he was back in Philadelphia, and had conferred with Randolph three days before—he again called upon the Attorney General to prosecute Jay and King for libel, and requested Jefferson to "prevail" upon the President to "direct that magistrate to commence as speedily as possible a suit in which the honor of France and my own are essentially concerned." And Jefferson informed Randolph that the President thought it "incumbent on him to recommend" prompt action on this occasion "as it concerns a public character peculiarly entitled to the protection of the laws." On the other hand, "citizens ought not to be vexed with groundless prosecutions," and Randolph was to be governed accordingly. And Randolph's decision was that he "must beg leave to decline the measures which you [Genet] desire, persuaded, as I am, that this case will not sustain the prosecution which you meditate." However, "any other gentleman of the profession, who may approve and advise the attempt, will be at no loss to point out a mode which does not require my intervention."

Edward Livingston, for one, and Peter Du Ponceau and Joseph Thomas of Philadelphia. "We have considered with attention," they notified Genet on December 23, "the two publications of Messrs. Jay and King . . . and the facts stated by Mr. Dallas, and are decidedly of the opinion that the authors of those publications have committed an offense, not only against the local law of this country, but against the law of nations, for which they may be indicted and punished. We would recommend to Mr. Genet to obtain the affidavit of the printer . . . that Messieurs Jay and King are the authors. . . . In the meantime, we can form

a decided opinion in what Court . . . the prosecution ought to be instituted. We at present think . . . that the Supreme Court has original jurisdiction."

No ifs and buts about that. Genet was about to "prosecute in your courts of judicature the authors and abettors of the odious and vile machinations that have been plotted against me by means of a series of impostures which for a while have fascinated the minds of the public, and misled even your First Magistrate." And as for Randolph, "since you refuse to cause to be rendered to my nation, the ally of yours, the justice claimed by its representative, I will apply immediately to the Judges; and should they refuse to admit my complaint, I will cover myself with the mantle of mourning, and will say America is no longer free."

He would have to say something like that, of course. He could never content himself with a plain statement, but it must also be adorned with artificial flowers of speech. For it was of the essence of the French revolutionary style—and of its American imitations—to be sublimely ridiculous.

8

And now the "certificate men" were simply hopping with rage. Genet writes to demand that Randolph prosecute them, and "Jefferson answers that the President has referred his demand to the Attorney General with directions to do what the occasion should require. This reply from Mr. Jefferson by order of the President was considered by Mr. Jay and me [King] as extraordinary, as it authorized inferences unfavorable to our characters, and such indeed as both the President and Mr. Jefferson were sensible we did not merit."

They sat down immediately and dispatched a hot letter to the President in which Jefferson and Randolph were "treated with much severity," and "requiring of [Washington's] justice to direct the Secretary of State to furnish us with a certified copy of his report . . . of the [Dallas] interview, and that he would permit us to publish the same." But "much difficulty occurred." Randolph wanted the President to reply, justifying him. Hamilton advised that the copy be sent. Knox was "desirous of preventing the affair terminating in a rupture between the President, Jay and [King], and was therefore solicitous of some middle course which should satisfy no one, but end in burying the affair in oblivion." And he wanted Jay and King to take back their letter to the President. But those gentlemen were taking back nothing.

Finally, Jay went to see the President, and "much conversation passed." Washington complained that his own position was very difficult, requiring "caution"—his Secretary of State being called a liar by Dallas, his Chief Justice being sued for libel, his Secretaries of the Treasury and War involved, possibly, in the propagating of slanders against a Foreign Minister, himself dragged into it since the famous report had been made officially to him; it was not an enviable situation for the President, certainly. Jefferson and Randolph, he assured Jay, had intended nothing unfriendly or incorrect. Jay called for the truth, and explained that "it was not to be expected that there should have been a suppression." They came, at last, to an understanding. Jay went home and sent the original draft of the letter to the President down to King. King handed it to Washington, who burned it in the Senator's presence,

"together with the letter [itself] and a paper in the President's handwriting justifying his conduct." A certified extract of Jefferson's report was handed to King.

It was late December, January, February of 1794. Randolph was now Secretary of State; the suit was pending; Mr. Jefferson of Monticello still remained considerably in "a back ground," as it were. Genet himself was not to see the friend of France again.

CHAPTER VII

FORLORN HOPES

1

ONE inevitably loses in these deliberately unchronological pages the sense of accumulating disasters that came furiously upon Genet during that summer of 1793. Santo Domingo, the mutiny, the appeal to the people, the letter of July from Deforgues, the notification, finally, of the request for his recall. Right and left, at night and at morning, from New York, from Paris, from Philadelphia, one calamity after another without rest.

They waited at Philadelphia until September 15 to tell him; more than three weeks after the dispatch of the letter to Morris. Knox wished eventually that it had been published, "to convince the minds of our own people" and prevent "all cavil at the meeting of Congress;" but at first they kept it secret, apparently to give themselves a start, an uncontroverted hearing, knowing that Genet would immediately send justifications to France if he were informed; for on October 6, when he learned that Genet's own documents had gone in the *Surveillante,* the President was exclaiming that "if our dispatch boat should fail, and duplicates are not sent, [Genet] will play the whole game himself."

In one word, they were afraid at Philadelphia. Genet had them in a panic. The session of Congress was approaching, the appeal to the people was proving a two edged weapon, and in spite of a spreading disgust for the French insolences in the ports which was actually to ruin him, there were still plenty of republicans yelling for Genet all over the country. The appeal business had not disposed of him, he was more active, more dangerous than ever.

But they told him on September 15. Jefferson sent him copies of the Morris papers and explained that his actions had "rendered it necessary in the opinion of the President to lay a faithful statement of them before the government of France." There must be in America a French Minister "disposed to respect the laws." In the meantime, "an anxious regard for [the interests of France] . . . will induce the Executive . . . to receive your communications in writing and to admit the continuance of your functions so long as they shall be restrained within the limits of the law . . . or shall be of the tenor usually observed towards independent nations by the representative of a friendly Power."

It was a staggering thing to receive, but Genet's answer came strong and firm—there are those who will call it incorrigible. "Persuaded," he wrote on September 18, "that the sovereignty of the United States resides essentially in the people and in its representation in the Congress; persuaded that the executive power is the only one which has been confided to the President . . . persuaded that this magistrate has not the right to decide questions the discussion of which the Constitution reserves particularly to the Congress; persuaded that he has not the power to bend

existing treaties to circumstances and to change their sense . . . I had deferred, in the sole view of maintaining good harmony . . . communicating to my Government . . . the original correspondence which has taken place . . . between you [Jefferson] and myself. . . . However, informed that the gentlemen who have been painted to me so often"—by Jefferson—"as aristocrats, partisans of monarchy, partisans of England . . . were laboring to ruin me . . . I was going to begin to collect these affecting materials and . . . transmit them to France . . . when the denunciation which those same men have excited the President to exhibit against me, through Mr. Morris, came to my hands."

Very well. "It is in the name of the French people that I am sent to their brethren—to free and sovereign men: it is then for the representatives of the American people and not for a single man to exhibit against me an act of accusation if I have merited it. . . . I pray you then, Sir, to place under the eyes of the President . . . the demand which I make in the name of equity to lay before Congress . . . all the questions relative to the political rights of France and [America] . . . the heads of accusation which [Morris] is charged to exhibit against me, and against the consuls whose character is compromitted and outraged in the most scandalous manner for having obeyed superior orders which it is neither in their power nor in mine to revoke."

As for himself, "I have done strictly my duty; I have defended my ground; and I will suffer no precedent against any of the rights of the French people while there remains within me a breath of life. . . . If I have shown firmness it is because it was not in my character to speak, as many peo-

ple do, in one way and act in another—to have an official language and a confidential language."

And let that shoe fit whatever foot it might.

2

The first thing to do was to get his case before the French Government as soon as possible. Genet put Pascal aboard the *Surveillante,* gave duplicates to the *Ceres,* and packed them off to France. As much of his correspondence as he could assemble, and Pascal would tell them the rest. "An intelligent man, an excellent observer, a zealous friend of liberty who has followed me everywhere, assisted me in all my labors, shared the various impressions made on my soul by the pure and innocent virtues of the American people; the corruption, the ambitious aims of its chiefs; the ardent and sublime love for French principles of the good countrymen, the old soldiers, the poor but industrious men of the towns—the base idolatry of the English Constitution by the big capitalists, the big merchants."

France had her many friends; "their zeal is pronounced, and they will uphold our rights with enthusiasm in the next Congress"—he believed that right up to the end—"in spite of Washington who has sacrificed them to our enemies, and who will never forgive me for having found a strong enough support in the people to cause the treaties to be executed in spite of him. That old friend of La Fayette [that ambitious man, *erased*] . . . calls me a Jacobin anarchist and threatens to have me recalled because I did not give myself up to the federalist party which is not willing to do anything for us, and whose only purpose is to establish monocracy here; but little do I care, my path is clear. I have the trust of

all good patriots and ambitious men do not intimidate me at all. The people is for us, and its opinions differ greatly today from that of its Government."

Washington "has annulled all my efforts"—that was Jeffersonian doctrine—"and my negotiations with his Ministers take the form only of a very lively polemic concerning the meaning of the treaties and the insults heaped upon the American flag by the English; but every day public opinion is strengthened, and Congress, the summoning of which I have not wished to accelerate during the harvest season"—another notion of Jefferson's—"because the idle aristocrats would be the first ones to respond, [Congress] will be entirely in favor of the cause of liberty." And then —"Sustain me, Citizen Minister, and be sure that I am and that I shall always be worthy of the confidence of my fellow citizens." *Erased.*

He erased it, but he too was afraid. This man Deforgues, the Jacobins of the "Mountain." He must have known in his heart that he was doomed.

And in Paris they shoved Pascal's papers into a drawer without looking at them, and threw him head first into prison, waiting for the guillotine. It was not Genet, but it was one of his crew.

3

And the next thing to do was to publish his instructions. Let everyone see whether he had acted arbitrarily. He had already been thinking of it, ever since the *Petite Démocrate* affair, and the prudent Bournonville was opposed. Other American friends too. It was unwise, and "there is one sentence alone of moment . . . and that is where you are

expressly forbid to take any steps which may give umbrage or create jealousy of an interference with our Constitution. The publication of this will show that you must have been a madman (in which case your country would not have employed you) or a fool (which your enemies are not so fortunate as to find you) to have acted the part they impute to you."

Yes, he had not been discreet. "Besides, I am persuaded that part of the instructions ought upon no account to be printed." And "Congress can take no cognizance of any personal imputation upon you, or of a difference between you and the Minister, and . . . appealing to them can only keep up the idea among your opponents that your object is to create parties and confusion, or to compel this country to a war. . . . At present the breach between you and the President may, by a little moderation, be entirely closed"—the unsuccessful attempt was actually to be made by Taylor, Gallatin and Edward Livingston, representing a caucus of Republican Congressmen—"I fear a publication would render it irreparable. There is a total impossibility of persuading the Americans that [Washington] can have erred intentionally. His vast services have hedged him about with such a divinity . . . that he is and will forever remain, unapproachable to any personal attack. On this subject we all think alike. . . ."

Very excellent, cool advice; and Bournonville had quiet, judicious things to say. "Remember," he wrote, "in what a mood and with what ideas we began the controversy over the privateers. . . . Our notions about it grew with time, but at first we were very much at a disadvantage because of the grounds on which we were attacked. . . . Having con-

stantly to handle entirely new questions . . . there resulted from this some uncertainty in our procedure." They had not always had time to study the problem very thoroughly. "We defended our cause with more wit and warmth than reason. Now the Americans like reason and quotations"—Jefferson and his Vattel—"they are hair splitters by nature, and perhaps they would not appreciate our way of reasoning as much as we hope."

And another thing. Jefferson's last letter about the *Petite Démocrate,* "a very reasonable letter which to American eyes will seem to have been dictated by justice"—that letter, which has appeared on another page, "remained without any answer, and the vessel sailed three days later. There is something that will make the worst possible public impression."

But Genet was past caring. Jay and King in America, Morris in France—he was determined to counteract all that, and his eyes were fixed on Congress. Through Bache he published an extract of his instructions, and sent a supply to the President to be distributed to Congress. This was in December, and Washington had already announced to that body, with the "papers," his request for Genet's recall. And Jefferson sent the pamphlets back, because the President alone was the judge of what documents should be submitted, and because communications between the Executive and the legislative branches were none of Genet's business.

And Genet sat down on the last day of the year and proclaimed that "I confine myself to declaring to you, to certifying to you, to repeating to you that I never intended to depart in my dealings with the Federal Government

either from the spirit or the letter of your Constitution, or from all the formalities, or from all the etiquettes which may be in force here; but that quite innocently I had thought that it was the constitutional duty of the President of a republic which aspires to a reputation of morality to produce before Congress what might tend to justify a man whom he had himself accused in a very strange manner before that legislative body; and that . . . fearing the resentment which the behavior towards me must inspire in [the French people] . . . I desired to give all possible information [to Congress] concerning a necessary investigation, the result of which can only be to admit an error based upon the most criminal and the blackest intrigue."

And "if this means of justifying myself and preventing unfortunate events is not granted to me, might I dare ask you, Sir, what means it is that I must employ in order to place my country's honor and my own under the protection of America and of her laws?"

There was no stopping him. With the skies falling, when he wrote it was always with belligerence, and his letters were flights of spears.

4

And with the skies falling, Genet went right on about his business, France's business.

To Canada, in September, he sent Mezières; an emissary, the English heard, "of great address and properly qualified to disseminate those democratic principles in which he is a perfect enthusiast." There was a mutinous spirit throughout Lower Canada, and much "progress made by the French agents of Genet." They were expecting the French fleet up there, and answering private appeals from

Carondelet at New Orleans for help against the Kentuckians.

To Kentucky, in October, he sent Lachaise, the grandson of a former French royal commissioner of Louisiana. Except financially, "our affairs wear a glorious aspect at present," Clark was writing. Only Lachaise did not know that he was travelling from Philadelphia with a trusted companion who was actually a Spanish spy—the famous Pisgignoux of the many spellings to his name; so that the Spaniards knew everything that was going on; and even began to think that some of the Kentucky rumors were deliberate French hoaxes to distract attention from the mouth of the Mississippi. And in any case, it was sufficient to write to Wilkinson, "to advise us promptly . . . of whatever may be concocted . . . in Kentucky . . . contrary to the interests of Spain."

And to Mangourit, as late as January, he sent word "not to let yourself be overwhelmed any more than I by the obstacles which an infernal league opposes to our zeal. [Our] project . . . is great—it will be useful to humanity, to our country. It must be executed. You are in need of money, you ask me for two thousand dollars. I am sending you four thousand. I will immediately send you more. You need a naval force, you fear that [the mutiny] may have deprived me of the means of sending you one, you are mistaken, you shall have one, count on my word. Make your preparations accordingly. . . . Adieu, my friend, some determination, some prudence, and everything will be all right."

As far back as August, Genet had seen what to do with the French fleet. It was useless to send the squadron again

to Santo Domingo; send it instead to destroy the English fisheries, to recapture St. Pierre and Miquelon, to burn Halifax. Then send it south to take the Bahamas, and on down to the Mississippi to cooperate in the capture of New Orleans. "In the name of liberty, Citizen Minister . . . leave me the forces which Fate has placed in my hands, increase them, improve them if possible, and be well persuaded that I will make very good use of them, and that my mission will fulfill the wishes of the Republic." And "if this letter is so short, it is because I am less occupied with shining than with accomplishing."

But the mutiny had dragged along; it had been impossible to do everything; and when the fleet finally did sail the frigates mutinied again! It was Bompard in the *Jupiter*. "Persuaded that in France he would be covered with laurels," he had deserted the fleet and set his course for home. And the other vessels had followed, constraining their commanders. But Genet was not discouraged. He would find other ships—he did find other ships—and Mangourit must go ahead.

And in that same January he was writing to "my dear friend," Miss Cornelia Clinton, that his affairs were in very good shape, and that she must never cease "to consider me as a man who has consecrated his life to you, and who looks upon you as the best reward which Heaven could confer upon him." And the rest of that letter is nobody's business.

5

And to Boston, in November, Genet sent Citizen Lequoi. Nancrède, in October, had heard rumors of the requested recall, and gave it as surprising news to Genet. Citizen

Quincy, the nephew of John Adams, had heard it from his uncle, and Citizen Quincy, "you know it, hasn't the reputation of being a very discreet man," but Citizen Quincy had added that "Mr. Adams had said that if Genet was recalled, *America should wade through rivers of blood.*" And Mr. Hancock, "our good friend," was dead, while "the Jays and Kings go on living." And with Hancock gone, it would be necessary to "double our courage and assiduity" in British New England.

And so Lequoi must go to combat the English influence, and "electrify plus" the minds of influential men, put himself in touch with Congressmen about to depart for Philadelphia, and increase the number of the friends of France. It was left to Lequoi to adopt methods proper for success, "without appearing to be moved by our propulsion." He was to talk and write; he was to promote new treaties; he was to draw as close as possible to "the virtuous Samuel Adams" and his friends, and demonstrate to them on all occasions "the absurdity of the Philadelphia Cabinet, the pettiness of its measures and the danger to which it exposes the honor and safety of [America] by prolonging a system of neutrality which no one observes."

And Lequoi was to make people feel "that there is not an instant to lose before setting the nation to war against England and Spain, and that the conquest of Canada and Louisiana must be made this very winter . . . and that clouds of privateers sustained by our fleets must go and destroy the commerce of our mutual enemies." After that Lequoi was to tour through Rhode Island and Connecticut, and then south to counteract the anti-French negro propaganda in those States.

There it was. Set the nation to war against England and Spain. Genet could deny it, was obliged to deny it, in all his official communications—even in subsequent letters to Lequoi, filled with sophistry about a real neutrality —but he wrote it down himself in his instructions to Lequoi, and inevitably, since this policy of war together with the instigation of an active secret propaganda was a part of his own instructions from his Government.

It was November, Jefferson had abandoned him and his recall had been signed, but he was still very dangerous to American tranquillity, since that was what America wanted. A powerful influence working in the open and in secret, obeying his Girondist orders, staking his career upon their fruition, spinning the web from Canada to Louisiana, preparing to seize a world for liberty, to bring America in at France's side, coming almost within sight of the horizons of success. With a few ships and some volunteers, just a little money, a great booming of partisan bells and guns, a furious energy—and a pen that was mighty. Nothing quite like it was ever again to be seen in America, and that was well for America, for her peace and for her dignity—after all, it has been the purpose of these pages to do him every justice, but he had no right to succeed, it was of those undertakings which a nation may not permit to any man—but the inspiration of his enterprise, the quality of his effort, are worthy of respect and profound attention.

But Lequoi did not find New England disposed for war. The farmers, the artisans were strongly republican and Francophile, "although attached to the living idol [Washington] which the Americans have set up for themselves." The American people had "a horror . . . of the crime of

political ingratitude, but it will be in vain to try and make it see in future dangers a sufficient motive for joining France: it wants *peace.* It wants it because it enjoys it, because it believes it necessary, and I assure you that it will come nearer to forcing its government to pay indemnities for our privateers out of the public funds than to arming itself in order to fight on our side." And that was done, and the Federal Government decided to pay damages caused by the French privateers, only the bill was to be sent to France.

The merchants were too closely involved with England. They looked only to their pockets, and they were afraid of war, because "cowardice is the companion of avarice." France must not count on persuading the Americans to make common political and commercial cause with France, still less military cause against "the common enemy of the liberty of mankind, the English." The only thing to do, Lequoi thought, was to alarm the Americans, to make them fear a rupture with France if the treaties were not observed.

Aside from that, more money to Boston, so the French consul could entertain more extensively and introduce Lequoi to more people—for "with this nation, friendship is born and cemented *à la toast!*" Peace or war, the Americans must always drink before talking.

6

Congress. Ever since the beginning Genet had put his faith in Congress. Ever since Jefferson had advised him to wait for a new, French supporting, Jeffersonian, republican Congress. Genet did not understand Presidents very well, perhaps. There were no Presidents in the French Republic. But Congress, that was the National Convention, that was

the representatives of the people, that *was* the people. And in France it was the people alone that mattered. Nothing could be done unless the Convention ratified it. So it must be in America, since France and America were the twin daughters of Liberty.

Congress met, and on December 5 the President told them that "it is with extreme concern that I have to inform you that the proceedings of a person whom they [France] have unfortunately appointed their Minister . . . here have breathed nothing of the friendly spirit of the nation which sent him; their tendency on the contrary has been to involve us in war abroad and discord and anarchy at home. . . . Where their danger was not imminent they have been borne with, from sentiments of regard for his nation . . . from a conviction that they would not suffer us to remain long exposed to the action of a person who has so little respected our mutual dispositions."

And Congress agreed, naturally, for the guns and bells of Jefferson's republicans were not America. Their turn would not come for seven years. Genet could not believe it. "Congress has met," he cried, "Washington has unmasked himself, America is befouled." In the words of John Adams, it was a "bolt of thunder" for Genet. Congress had failed him.

But he was not beaten yet. Nothing had come from France; Congress would support him when it had time to think. On December 23 he was writing to Lequoi to tell him that the appeal to the people story was dead. "All its supporters are staggering, public opinion judges them . . . and I think more of fortifying myself against victory than of parrying the blows of their blunted daggers. . . . The

swashbucklers of aristocracy have all lost the phantom against which they were fencing; you see how silent they are; the silence of our friends is even more significant." More work at Boston, where the consular racket was still clanging. Make it appear that "we are only playing an accidental part in the crisis which is perhaps about to occur. It is not our fault if the ill treatment of which we have been the victims stirs the representatives [in Congress] . . . and changes their inertia into indignation. Let us avenge our country, let us demand nothing more than that."

The letters came pouring in again. Consuls, naval officers, French societies. "Consternation"—"The ruin of our cause in America"—"The triumph of the English"—"The Executive Council [of France] will do you justice and the generous nation will declare that you have merited well of the country"—"Sacrificed to a faction of intriguers who in spite of the treaties direct the operations of [America] against our country which you have so well defended"—"The Executive Council will be obliged to approve the transactions of your Ministry which entitle you to the gratitude of the nation"—it was a chorus of sympathy and approbation.

And Pichon, one of the secretaries, had had a number of remarkable things to say—valuable for their presentation of the French legation's attitude—concerning his chief's contest with Washington, the "old athlete loaded with laurels." Public opinion would decide the issue, and "the question for me is not so much to know how you will emerge from this combat, as to use victory with moderation. I fear triumph for you more than attacks." They knew him quite well, the secretaries, and they were very fond of him.

And "Washington makes a traitor of you: leave him the satisfaction of cowards, namely to miss their shots with impunity. . . . If you wage open warfare I am afraid that you might succumb. Convinced as you are that he seeks to ruin you, prepare for him a way of retreat. . . . For your interest's sake . . . avoid explosions here. The field of battle . . . is in France. It is there that you will easily undermine his former renown. Let us demonstrate to the judges the aristocracy of the Federal Government, the close relation between the hatred of [Genet] and the hatred of [republican] principles; let us try and obtain an . . . examination of all the *pots pourris* of Mount Vernon, which will no doubt be further poisoned by 'Pasha' Morris."

A little calm, and everybody keep his head. "Let us be truthful, we have pushed resistance too far, but the people do not hate us yet." Moderation in America, "while in France you pull the strongest wires, it will result that you will not be recalled. No appeal to the people. The important thing . . . is to avoid putting the people in a frame of mind to demand your recall; this is what would unfailingly take place if you were to engage in an open struggle with Washington." The displeasure of the people was only temporary, but "the hatred of the Government is acute. It is not you that it is desired to revoke, it is the storm gathering over Philadelphia that it is sought to avoid by sending away the man who appears to be its occasional cause. If they can succeed in having you recalled [before Congress meets, for this letter was written in November] the game is won by the Government."

Manage the people, do not have "the fatal hostility of the people against you." Let the atmosphere of unpopu-

de faire à mon égard des démarches
dignes de déspotes comme eux.
Ces notions et cette dernière infamie
ont rompu tous mes liens et ont
pleinement justifié au tribunal de
ma conscience le parti que j'ai pris
d'éviter les poignards et les ~~bourreaux~~
bourreaux ou plutôt les bouchers
d'une bande de conspirateurs dont
la noire politique étoit de salir
d'ensanglanter de prostituer la belle
statue de la liberté pour en dégoûter
tous les adorateurs; de persécuter
d'anéantir sous mille prétextes
inventés par le Machiavelisme le
plus délié et saisis avec délire avec ivresse par
les passions humaines les plus
violentes les auteurs les défenseurs
de la Révolution; de détruire les
patriotes les uns par les autres;

GENET TO FAUCHET, HIS SUCCESSOR

Sample page of the duplicate letter of 1794, containing the accusation of conspiracy against Robespierre. Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the Genet papers.

larity created by Jay and King be dissipated. "Try to be reconciled with the Government. You know that courtiers must conceal their grievances." Jefferson could be treated more openly, for he was "a man of honor" who did not care for confidential interviews! "Try not to be recalled. Keep on good terms with the people. Do not awaken Cerberus. . . . Isolate this inert mass . . . and Hamilton's electrical performances will only galvanize the insects that flutter in the impure air of his office." Did Genet doubt "that everyone will fall into your arms as soon as you have made clear your affections for that people who have been led to believe that you were trying to strangle them? Where will they be taken to drag them away from you? To George III? Some would like only too well to do that." Why this profound silence concerning the British maritime outrages, "while on all sides they were howling against our little misdeeds? Citizen, those men are clever; they will ruin us if we are not as wicked as they."

And in France, what would the Convention do? Harm might be caused "by men determined to hound a beaten enemy. But these denunciations [of Washington's] will be presented by a man without very great influence. 'Pasha' Morris and the aristocratic tendencies of the Government are well known."

A curious letter, compounded of wisdom and illusions.

7

And on January 20 the President was notifying Congress that "I now communicate to you that [Genet's] conduct has been unequivocally disapproved, and that the strongest assurances have been given that his recall should

be expedited without delay." Captain Culver was back, and only just in time, or Genet would have been dismissed because of all the drum beating in Carolina and Kentucky. It had come to that in the Cabinet—and Jefferson, the sponsor of Michaux, withdrawn to Monticello.

The letters came in once more. Fine, hearty, angry letters. Dannery at Boston—"I do not pity you, but the common cause. It is manifest to me that the name of your nominal accuser [Washington]—for Mr. Hamilton is behind the scenes—is the only cause of [your] recall. . . . Tell them [in France] that . . . the appearance of the least weakness will complete the ruin of our cause here, followed infallibly by the total loss of this unhappy country. We must have a Roman mission here, and would to God it were you in charge. Will you execute our treaties, yes or no? Do you want peace or war?" And "America would turn inside out before consenting to war with France." Moultrie —"the people of America in general are chagrined on hearing of your recall, and . . . encourage the hope that [it] will not take place, especially when we are not ignorant of the misbehavior of [Morris]." The reports spread against Genet were "palpable falsehoods, downright lies and political tricks," and "notwithstanding the ministerial gentry may triumph on your recall, your stay among us, Citizen, is the desire of much the greater part of the [American] people, the trading towns excepted, who are mostly under British influence."

There was more to it—more to all these letters—but one is obliged to skim. Cassan at Philadelphia, who did not accept the President's announcement. "Washington and the Federal Government . . . are the declared enemies of the

French Revolution . . . they have not ceased . . . to violate as regards our nation the treaties and the rights of men . . . devoted to the British faction they sacrifice the interests of France every day to those of England." And if Genet was really recalled, "I could not stay at a post where I would find myself continually in opposition to myself." He preferred to be relieved. Mangourit—"we will resist the storm . . . when the sovereignty of the French people speaks to this corrupt government which is a monster made up of all the political elements, this nation which is a mixed salad of the human race—*Whasington* will soon be relegated from his Olympus among the elysian shades. . . ."

Hauterive, who wrote to France in support of his Minister, and who told Genet to hurry up with his full reports to the Convention. It would not require "voluminous justifications" to prove to them that "the majority of the American people, though imbued with a so to speak immemorial veneration for certain personages, is not disposed to devote itself blindly to the cause of their offended pride." And Genet's disgrace would be a disaster, because his successor would not dare to exhibit any firmness at all. And when Genet expressed his belief that the recall was official, Hauterive would not believe it. "The government of the Republic cannot have answered in this manner to vague denunciations, to accusations devoid of proof." And if it had, Hauterive hoped that, with more accurate information before it, "it would not give to the [American] Government the satisfaction of punishing in you, and of discouraging in others, the energy with which every good citizen must defend his country's rights."

And at Philadelphia, on February 7, the officers of the

Pennsylvania militia, assembled at their "elegant and frugal" banquet, drank heartily to the toast "May free men always be governed by laws and not by proclamations." But when the health of Washington was proposed—and Washington the Soldier only—the officers of the militia refused to drink, and smashed their glasses against the wall. They would not drink to "that man." But they did finally drink to "Citizen Genet, victim of so much persecution—may his country reward his pure civism; may the shafts aimed at him, come back on those who fire them."

And still they complained, in those magnificent days, of tyranny!

8

Genet went right on. Nothing official had come from France. Louisiana, Florida, there was still time.

There were Government proclamations out everywhere now against the expeditions, and in Kentucky the letters went back and forth. Jefferson had warned Governor Shelby, in case he should have "reason to believe any such enterprise meditated"—as though Jefferson had not known about it all summer long. And Shelby had replied that he would "feel but little inclination to take an active part in punishing or restraining any of my fellow citizens for a supposed intention, only to gratify the fears of the [Spanish] Minister." It seemed to them out there that the Government's powers were "questionable," and indeed, Shelby was told by his State Secretary, "it appears to me that good policy will justify the Executive . . . in discovering a certain degree of unwillingness to oppose the progress of an enterprise which has for its object the free navigation of

the Mississippi." Let the expedition proceed, and perhaps influence Congress.

All the western country, the Spanish spies were reporting in January, was "in favor of the French side and does not heed the orders and provisions of the President." Although there were those who felt differently. Governor Blount of Tennessee, for instance—himself soon to be implicated in a similar English adventure—who knew that "these schemes must proceed from the machinations . . . of that Jacobin incendiary Genet, which is reason sufficient to make every honest mind revolt at the very idea." And there were others who thought that the whole undertaking was "drooping" and not worthy of attention.

And in South Carolina, in December, the Legislature had passed preventive resolutions, and Moultrie had issued a proclamation. "An American now openly espousing the cause of liberty," Stephen Drayton informed Genet, "by joining a French army . . . is branded with the epithet of traitor—his body accordingly is seized and thrown into jail, his locks are forced and the most private recesses are searched for papers . . . to convict him. . . . Such has been my case, such has been the conduct of my countrymen against a nation . . . who spill their blood to emancipate them from the bonds of tyranny. The genius of Britain overawes that of America and freedom."

But that meant nothing. In January, Moultrie was still the "venerable friend," visiting Mangourit, interviewing Tate, scolding Genet for not sending enough money, suggesting that higher ranks be granted to some of the American veteran volunteers. He was "happy," and he "knows nothing of Florida." And in February, Abner Hammond

had been seized by the Spaniards, but no matter. The back country people were ready, "but if they are left too long with their noses in the water, energy will evaporate and they will become our enemies, they will shout that we have duped them. So let us hurry everything. The season is favorable. . . . *Allons enfants de la Patrie!*" And in March, Genet must send shoes and uniforms, and a thousand "cover *Blanketts.*" And cannons were being obtained in Virginia, off a vessel called the *Proud Roderigo*—and there perhaps was Beaumarchais's old ship of the Hortalez days, dismantled for another gun running. For there could surely not have been two such names afloat.

Everything was set for April 10. An attack on St. Augustine. Michaux was at Charleston; Genet was finding six ships to send to the St. Mary's River; Tate claimed to have two thousand men, Hammond promised fifteen hundred. Out in the West, the Democratic Society of Lexington had furnished supplies and boats; two thousand men, according to Lachaise, were enlisted—"Men," Clark declared, "we could have got in what numbers we chose"—everything was ready, "the *rendez-vous,* the general marching orders given, troops from every county on the move."

So close a thing was it. But at Philadelphia, in February, a frigate had arrived from France. Fauchet was there with the Commissioners. And on March 6 the gazettes were printing his proclamation. "In the name of the French Republic: every Frenchman is forbid to violate the neutrality of the United States. All commissions . . . tending to infringe that neutrality are revoked and are to be returned." The papers travelled south and west—and only just in time—and everywhere men stopped to read.

And it was something for the Federal Government to swallow; that what the presidential proclamations could not prevent—they would have called out the troops, of course—a foreign Minister's notice in the gazettes was sufficient to arrest.

But the Federal Government was satisfied. Fauchet had come, and the peril of Genet was passed. "The manners of Mr. Fauchet and of Mr. Genet . . . appear to have been cast in very different molds," the President was soon to be telling Richard Henry Lee. "The former has been temperate and placid in all his movements hitherto." Still, and the reservation was curious, "it is time only that will enable us to form a decisive judgment of each, and of the objects of their pursuit."

9

Mangourit would not believe it. It was an English hoax. Go on with the expedition. And when it was certain, confirmed by Genet, he sent Tate up in March to see Fauchet, "with his soul saturated with grief." He could not believe that the Spanish projects were overthrown. "In the name of the Republic, send us some artillery, some guns with bayonets . . . on the tenth, the tenth [of April] we send the hymns of the Republic echoing through the caverns of royalty." Genet had promised ships and money—"Where are we at? The commanders of our legions are flabbergasted."

And the Commissioners were tempted; it seemed such a pity not to seize the moment. But they had to refuse, and there was nothing left for the commanders of the legions to do but try and collect their monies—to send young Citizen Fulton to France, finally, to push their forlorn claims.

And in 1796, Minister Adet—Fauchet was not to last very long—Minister Adet, who was very busy with Canadian ventures of his own, summed it up. "Success was never so near, and if [Genet's] orders [to the fleet] had been obeyed this brilliant revolution would undoubtedly have been achieved." It had failed because of the second naval mutiny, and because of the *éclat* with which the whole affair had been conducted. Troops had been raised "as publicly as they might have been in France," and at Philadelphia, "even under the Executive's eyes, these warlike measures were not veiled at all." Because a Secretary of State had not said No? And in the end France had "sacrificed an important conquest, the agents who had prepared it and the soldiers who were to undertake it, to the promised friendship of Washington."

Forlorn hopes.

CHAPTER VIII

CORNELIA'S FARM

1

FAUCHET had arrived—Hamilton's "meteor following a comet"—and in his pocket a decree of the Committee of Public Safety ordering him to disavow the "criminal conduct" of Genet, to disarm the privateers, to depose the offending consuls. And to arrest Genet. Signed Barrère, Hérault, Billaud-Varenne, Collot-d'Herbois, Saint-Just, Robespierre. Some of the grandest of the grand moguls of the Terror.

And before he had seen Genet, before he had yet been officially received—they were always in a hurry, these French Ministers—Fauchet was demanding "the delivery of Genet in order to send him to France by the return of the ships of war in which he arrived." And Genet himself had it that the guillotine was aboard the flagship, "a brand new guillotine," and that he was to have been executed at once. It was a "courtesy" to Washington—so Genet described it many years later to the King of France—imagined by Robespierre in order to "give his American colleague the spectacle of an *auto de fé* Paris style, and enable him to make use of [the machine] afterwards against the anti-Federalists."

And this was all fantastic enough, but there was worse to come. For when the President refused to surrender Genet—one has Rufus King's record of Washington's personal account—"enquiry [was] made whether the Government would wink at an attempt to seize and send Genet to France." And again the President refused; because "we were not sanguinary in our temper," because his recall was "enough," because "we ought not to wish his punishment." But Randolph—"your friend," Genet afterwards reminded Jefferson—Randolph "added in confidence that I [Genet] still had many friends, that it would be necessary to wait, but that if France insisted they would nevertheless see if the powers of the President . . . could not afford some expedient for doing what France desired." Genet was going about with an armed guard, he was in peril of being kidnapped, and Fauchet made no bones about it.

It was a brutal episode, instigated originally by Gouverneur Morris, tentatively abetted by Randolph, who was soon to have those secret dealings with Fauchet which cost him his place in the Cabinet—for Fauchet was to learn nothing from Genet; in the presence of Jay's astonishing treaty with England, he was to find himself captured, inevitably, in the republican camp, subsidizing Congressmen, interfering furiously in American affairs; as indeed any French Minister of that day was bound to do if he hoped to sustain the cause of his country against the increasingly Anglophile Federalist policy. Genet must have laughed—and later on at Adet, violently campaigning in 1796 for Jefferson's election—and in 1795 one of Fauchet's secretaries was back in France "to tell you that the best thing you can do is to call home Fauchet and all the rest of us, and

employ Genet again, for he was really worth more than all of us put together."

A brutal episode, and a cynical reward for many heart-breaking months of patriotic labor which, if it merited rebuke, deserved also the honors of a fight well fought. But the whole transaction, to Genet, was unspeakable—that recall decreed by Robespierre "without investigation, without comparing my instructions with the complaints which they had aroused, without even reading my dispatches carried by my secretary"—and he never forgot it. And as for the suit against Jay and King—there was a law in France rendering the families of envoys responsible for their acts abroad. The suit must be dropped at once, or else Genet's mother and sisters might tread the planks of the guillotine. Never mind rights and wrongs—drop the suit, or risk the consequences at home. Fauchet made that very clear; and one cannot help wondering whether he had been talking with Randolph.

So the Terror came to Genet, in *Ventose* of the Year II of the Republic One and Indivisible. And to Cornelia Clinton, in the midst of it, he wrote that "the more admirable you make yourself appear to my eyes, the more my reason must overcome my love. I sincerely admire your sentiments. They are worthy of your beautiful soul, and I cannot better merit it than by leaving you to your happy destiny if mine by the perfidy of Washington should be different."

It was before the Government's decision concerning Fauchet's request was known, and Genet was releasing Cornelia from her engagement. "It is you alone," he assured her, "whom I love, it is you alone who are the object of my ambition, and I am determined not to encourage the hopes that you have permitted me to conceive until such time as I

shall know what will be my lot, until such time as I shall know if I can cause you to enjoy that state in society to which your charms, your graces, your perfections call you. The generosity of your conduct demands it, and I should be wanting in delicacy if I should pursue any different course. Do not expect me then, my dear friend, until after my enigma is solved; and in the meantime assure your estimable father that if Heaven protects me sufficiently to unite me to the incomparable Cornelia, he can count me among the number of his most grateful and attached children. . . ."

But Cornelia would listen to none of this, and for her there was no Terror, and no terrors—except of separation.

2

Robespierre — Robertspierre, as Genet frequently spelled it, recalling the traditional Picardy form of the name noted by Mr. Belloc—Robertspeare—founded on the belief in an Irish origin for the family.

To France, to the world, he was the French Revolution personified, in 1794 the Terror. Now it may be that this was one of History's magnificent ironies; that the thing of which he was made the living image, the thing for which he was finally destroyed, all the crimson brutality of the terrible year, was a thing that in secret he loathed; that he was opposed to the Terror and on *that* account exterminated by his colleagues; that he would have stopped the Terror, but did not ever quite dare because he must always yield, yield to pressure in order to preserve the legend of an omnipotence which he did not possess, and which was become the indispensable nourishment of his life. That he was actually sent to his death for not doing well enough the thing for

having supposedly done which too well the populace wanted him killed. Or it may be that other suspicions were true; suspicions of personal ambition suddenly gone to the head; of the coldest duplicity; of intrigues with the *émigrés* abroad, with the royalists who were there, always, in the shadows, active and potential, with the Boy who was the symbol. Suspicions of an intention to restore the monarchy.

To Genet he was something definite, something that time did not change, the same in 1831 as in 1794. "A monster vomited from hell"—that was in 1831, in the letter to the King of France; "the blackguard of whom the earth has just been purged"—that was in 1794, after *Thermidor,* in the letter to Fauchet. The man of the Jacobins, of the "Mountain," the destroyer of Danton and of the Girondists. But it was not simply a personal hatred with Genet. He had his explanation of his own disaster. It was a strange vision of Robespierre aping Washington, attracted by the power resident in the American Executive, "listening to the voice of the dictatorship, flattering himself with the thought of sitting soon in France . . . upon a seat no less elevated than that which Washington occupied in America;" acceding to Washington's request as if to something supreme, sacrificing Genet, abandoning him on the breach, "with *éclat* in order to accustom the French to revere a popular crown under the name of Presidency."

There was something else, "a profound atrocity" which Genet told Fauchet that he had "long since penetrated and unmasked." Facts about Mr. de Robespierre based on documents concerning which one has only Genet's word, since they have not survived among his papers. "Letters of the highest importance which I had received through the most

reliable channels at Petersburg, [which] had enabled me, among many other dark mysteries, to discover that Robespierre and his accomplices, from the time of the expiration of the Constituant Assembly [in 1791], were the agents—masked under the deepest revolutionary colors—of Rome, of Madrid and of Coblenz"—headquarters of the Princes. Other letters referred to later by Genet, proving that Robespierre had been "the secret agent of Count de Lille, Louis XVIII, [who] advised him to strike off the heads of all those who . . . had taken part in the Revolution." Letters mentioned in a note to Genet—available in the Genet papers—from Colonel Colonna d'Ornano who testified that "I saw the originals in one of the cupboards of the Tuileries." An interesting statement to place side by side with Billaud-Varenne's concerning the fate of the Dauphin.

One proceeds. Those "men of blood," a "band of conspirators whose black policy it was to soil, to bloody, to prostitute the beautiful statue of Liberty in order to disgust all its worshippers with it; to persecute, to annihilate under a thousand trumped up pretexts . . . the authors, the defenders of the Revolution; to cause the patriots to destroy each other; to disparage the national representatives everywhere . . . to batter down all the barriers . . . to level, to melt the entire Republic into a single mass, without division, without gradation; finally to concentrate all powers in a Committee which was then to invest a master with them; in a word to practice the counter revolution through an excess of revolution, last and only method remaining to the kings combined against us."

One takes it or leaves it.

3

There was nothing to do but wind up affairs and hand over the files and ledgers. Genet "cooperated in every way with good grace," Fauchet testified. It took eight days simply to sort the papers, and several weeks to make the inventory. Fauchet, who was to do the same thing in a different way, found that Genet had "vigorously pronounced himself in favor of a party opposed to the [Federal] Government; that he [had] even exasperated that party; that he [had] offended all the heads of the executive power." Fauchet was inclined to believe that he himself had "detected among some of those with whom [Genet] associated more personal hatred of Washington than love of France." But "the people is French and wants war"—Fauchet, listening to the Francophile clamor rising in 1794 from American pulpits and presses, was sure of that.

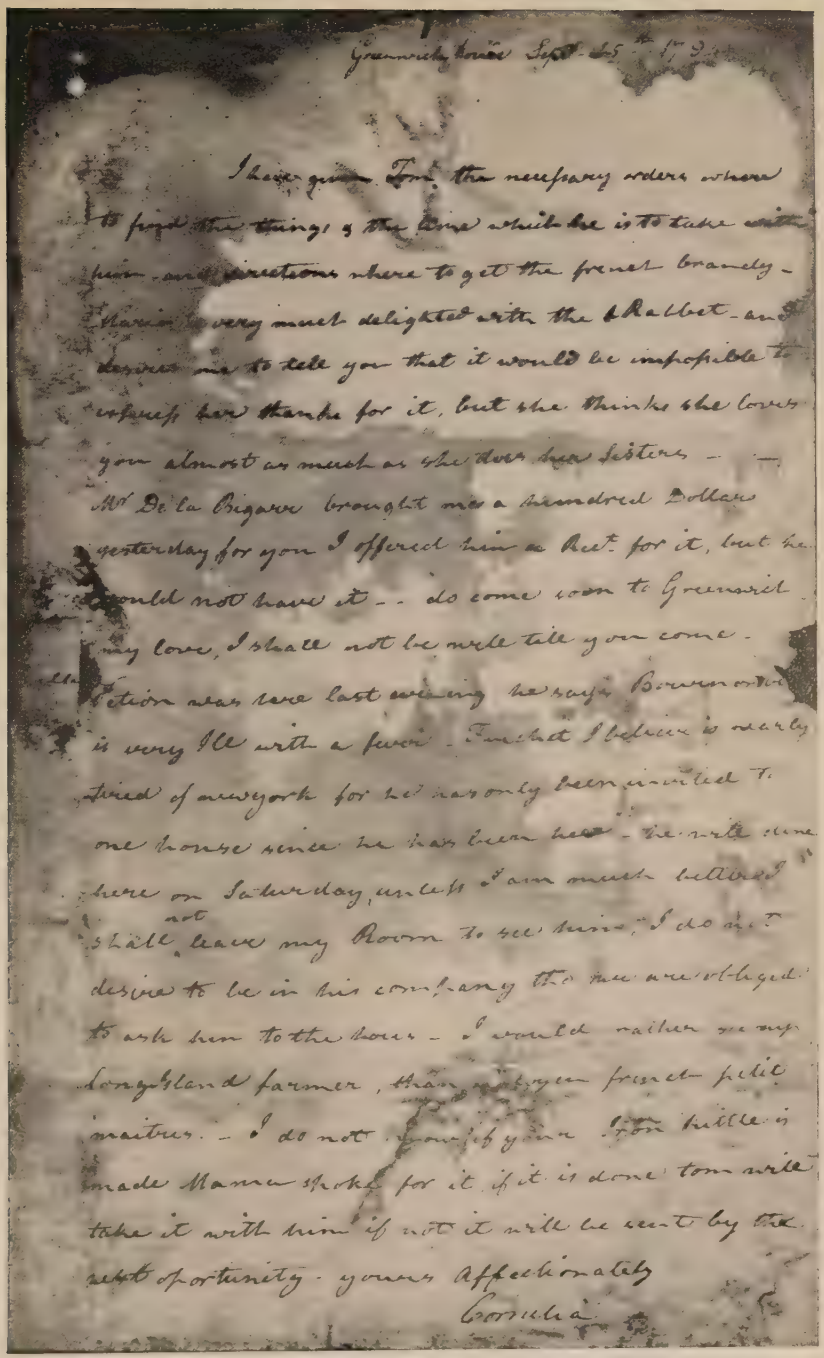
And in Holland, already in 1795, Representative of the People Richard was telling John Quincy Adams that "we had a Minister in [America] . . . who conducted himself imprudently . . . [but his] intentions, I believe, were not bad. . . . He fell into bad hands upon his arrival in America and was impelled to his offensive conduct by people of the country who wanted to produce a discord between your Government and our Minister to serve their personal views." The British had fomented it, Richard thought, and "they were at the same time intriguing with [France] to make us believe the American Government was hostile to France." Richard was "sorry for Genet, because he is a man of talents and meant well . . . though he got led into trouble by bad advisers."

Yes, he should have paid more attention to Izard.

And in Paris in that same year, when young Citizen Fulton was appearing before the new Committee of Public Safety to submit the claims of the Kentucky volunteers, "his petition and his conversation," Genet recorded, "excited considerable curiosity; they sent for my public and private instructions, and Siéyès having read them attentively expressed this sentiment in presence of Mr. Fulton who has reported it to me—'Genet hath done all he had been ordered to do, and still if he [had] returned they would have murdered him.'"

In Paris they would have murdered him, and at Philadelphia he could not get his accounts settled—he was never to get them settled. It required months to investigate and balance them, and "the austere integrity which presided over all my operations can only desire and solicit publicity." He had handled enormous sums, for ships, for supplies, for the refugees, for the fleet, for hospitals, for propaganda; and while La Forest was pretending that "Genet and his agents [had] dilapidated the funds of the Republic [and] purchased lands," they could not find a penny out of the way. On the contrary—what with personal advances out of his pocket, and salary due, and damage claims on property lost coming from Russia, and again to America in a ship sunk in the Delaware—it was seen that the French Government owed him a good many thousand francs.

But in 1797 he was writing to the French *Directoire,* in a postscript "torn from me by indigence," that "I was poor when I was appointed to the Philadelphia post, I still am [and I owe the bread that I eat in a large measure to love and friendship, *erased*]." And in 1801 he was again writing



Greenwich House Sept. 25th 1793

I have given Tom the necessary orders where to find the things & the time which he is to take with him - and directions where to get the french brandy - Maria is very much delighted with the Rabbet - and desires me to tell you that it would be impossible to express her thanks for it, but she thinks she loves you almost as much as she does her sisters - - Mr De la Bigarre brought me a hundred Dollars yesterday for you I offered him a Recd. for it, but he would not have it - - do come soon to Greenwich my love, I shall not be well till you come - Petion was here last evening he says Bournonville is very Ill with a fever - Fauchet I believe is nearly tired of newyork for he has only been invited to one house since he has been here - he will dine here on Saturday, unless I am much better I shall not leave my Room to see him, I do not desire to be in his company tho we are obliged to ask him to the house - I would rather see my Long Island farmer, than a dozen french petit maitres. - I do not know if your Iron kittle is made Mama spoke for it if it is done tom will take it with him if not it will be sent by the next opportunity - yours Affectionately

Cornelia

CORNELIA CLINTON TO GENET

Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the Genet papers. The letter has been partly destroyed by fire.

to the French Consul General that "if the department to which I have sacrificed twenty years of my life could pay me this sum, it would help me to provide a roof for myself and bring up my children." And in 1831 he was still writing about it to the King of France. Madame Campan had long since tried to collect his recognized claim, but "by nature of the [depreciation] in *assignats* . . . the sum of forty *sous*," she reported, "not quite equal to one dollar, would have acquitted the debt. I did not claim it."

Well, that was all. He was just thirty-one and his country had no use for him. He announced the sale of his horses and carriage, from which the tricolor stripe was removed, and put away his tricolor sash. The others were separated; Pascal still in prison—but *Thermidor* was to save him—Cassan, Moissonnier, Pichon, Bournonville, scattered at various tasks or returning to France. From Charleston, Mangourit wrote hopefully that "the Convention will not see the good that you have done without rendering you a consoling justice; there you will expose the picture of political lies; [such] base and hideous ingratitude will astonish the incorruptible Robespierre . . . that Frenchman will be the first to give you the civic kiss"—the poor Mangourit was always talking nonsense—"without you the liberty of the United States would have perished, their treaties with France would have been torn up, and the British leopard would have appeared again for the second time in America. . . . Adieu Genet!"

Adieu Genet.

4

And now go home. Genet must go home to France. There was a law requiring officials relieved of their missions

to appear within three months at the bar of the Convention, or be listed as proscribed expatriates. Without entirely realizing, perhaps, the fate that awaited him if he stepped into a French ship or put foot ashore in a French port, his friends began pressing him to go home.

Moissonnier was insistent. "Do not delay returning to your country," he wrote on March 29. "Honor and duty command you to do so, the fear with which it is sought to deceive you is only imaginary, you possess the esteem of persons who . . . will precede you to France, and the storm with which you are threatened will at once be dispelled." France would be enlightened—another letter, on April 28—Genet would be vindicated. As a matter of fact, could anyone have believed all these calumnies about him? "No, the prestige of a moment cannot have destroyed all the good that you have done for the Republic. Only appear and you will receive the reward of your virtues. . . . Everyone does you justice, even your enemies, and you are afraid to appear. Depart, friend citizen, I implore you, let nothing detain you. Those factions that were threatening to destroy the Republic cannot exist for long. . . . Your civic virtue is known, and it would be a wrong done to your country to deprive it of the great talents . . . which you possess."

Diplomatic talents. "It is not that I doubt your military talents . . . but in politics you will not find your equal. And so follow the career laid out for you, it is there that you will outdistance other men, there that you must render signal services worth victories to your country. . . . Do not tear away from France one of the torches that illuminate her. It would be wicked of you to deprive her of it." And on May 11 there was a frigate sailing, but "I don't hear it

said that you are preparing to go to France. Would you renounce your country? I do not dare to believe it. . . . Will you say that opportunities have failed you? That excuse is not admissible. Will you employ other pretexts? None can exist. Your country recalls you, you have been accused, you must go, your actions justify you sufficiently, and far from having to dread reproaches it is only praise that you will receive."

He must go, he must go—"I have already told you . . . those who advise you to wait are not your friends, they want your ruin. . . . A civic crown awaits you [in France], it will be decreed that you have merited well of the country. . . . Depart, all your friends urge you. Even the Americans . . . would be astonished to see you remain longer; any delay would announce a fear which you ought not to display. . . . I speak to you this way only because I love you, because I am jealous for your glory, because I believe it endangered if you do not make use of the opportunity . . . to return to your country, I might even say to your duties."

And on May 25 the frigate was gone—it was the *Concorde*—and what was he doing? "Following the example of [America] are you waiting until the enemy shall have humiliated you, overthrown you, crushed you, to raise yourself. . . . It is at the call of your enemy that you ought to appear. . . . If you delay . . . you will be defeated, your slowness in appearing will be used to establish your guilt." It was true that with Cornelia "one can do without any other happiness, but before belonging to her you were a Frenchman and a republican; all the services which you might have rendered to your country in these difficult times

are so many thefts that you perform. . . . Are you sure that [enemies] have not sought to deceive you? That is what I beg you to think of."

But Genet was sure. There was a guillotine for him in France. He did not go; during forty years to come, he was never to go. "All these infamies," he told Jefferson in 1797, "fully justified in the tribunal of my conscience the course I have taken . . . to remain in America after rendering my accounts and placing my papers in [Fauchet's] hands in an honorable manner; and although with little fortune to bury myself in retirement and silence; to meditate upon the great revolutions of the world; to try to penetrate the secrets of nature; and above all to isolate myself from the intrigues of courts and the discouraging cabals of the people." Long ago, reading Crèvecœur's *Letters of an American Farmer* "in which he depicts in the most enticing . . . colors the happiness and pleasure of rural and married life in [America] and particularly in the State of New York," Genet had "fervently and sincerely . . . formed the wish of becoming an inhabitant of such a happy country, and of marrying an American Lady."

He was in New York in July—on July 4, walking in procession with Governor Clinton, singing republican songs, and, according to Moreau de Saint Méry, insulting Talleyrand and other royalist refugees who were looking on—he scraped together some pennies, found something that he could afford at Jamaica on "longisland," and in September he was working away at his farm. Cornelia's Farm.

And as for the American Lady, "do come soon to Greenwich, my love," she was writing. "I shall not be well till you come. . . . Fauchet I believe is nearly tired of New

York for he has only been invited to one house since he has been here. He will dine here on Saturday; unless I am much better I shall not leave my room to see him. I do not desire to be in his company, though we are obliged to ask him to the house. I would rather see my Long Island farmer than a dozen French *petits maitres.*"

5

Genet was not going home, and in October—in *Brumaire* of the Year III—Fauchet wanted to know why.

Genet took fourteen pages to tell him—it was the first of his several vindicating briefs—after submitting drafts to Bournonville, who as usual suggested moderation. "You assume the title of cultivator . . . but did you reflect that in becoming an American cultivator you became a French *émigré* and put your family in France under the rigors of the law, and in the unfortunate position of being interned until the peace?" Genet ought not to declare that he renounced his country; such a declaration might complicate his situation, and that of his family in France. And "who knows if in thus closing for yourself access to your country forever, the desire to return there might not eventually become a perpetual cause of torment for you?" And a carelessly worded reference to "revolution" undertaken by the Democratic Societies was inaccurate and dangerous, conducive to legal action. And Genet was not to be so ironical. "It is allowed to thee . . . to be warm in thy vindication . . . but it is not allowed to thee to be ironical." Always wise and prudent, Bournonville; an excellent person, apparently—but the references to Robespierre did not at all disturb him. It must be that he believed them.

Genet took his friend's advice, and in a long recital of his official acts which it is impossible to reproduce in these pages—including the attack on Robespierre—informed Fauchet that "the country [France] was in danger; instead of amusing myself with puerile gropings, I took steps promptly to . . . combat the predetermined opposition of a government by nature idolatrous of the English." He had maintained the treaties, and the "aristocrats and English partisans . . . showered me with insults, overwhelmed me with calumnies, and finally . . . resolved upon my ruin." And then Robespierre and Fauchet's murderous instructions. "These transactions and this final infamy broke all my bonds and fully justified . . . my determination . . . to avoid the daggers and the executioners, or rather the butchers, of a band of conspirators."

And so he had remained in America, content to occupy himself with agriculture, philosophy and literature—some of these paragraphs were duplicated later in the letter to Jefferson—and to take up again the thread of his correspondence with the learned European societies of which he was a member. And let France be faithful to principles rather than to individuals; let her rely upon the cultivation of her soil for her prosperity rather than upon corrupting commerce and the perilous gold of foreigners; let her virtues be her negotiators, her good faith her rights of men, integrity her policy, publicity its secret, and her generals her only ambassadors. "Finally, like the wise Chinese, let her concern herself solely with her internal affairs, and renounce external politics which are incompatible with her character." Otherwise she would only serve as conductor for "the poison of monarchical governments" with which the American

Government had been infected at its birth. And in any case, Genet's own fate would "enslave the zeal, paralyze the courage, abase the pride," of any future envoys.

There. "I leave you, Citizen Minister, to take up again the labor of [my] little farm. . . . I purchased it with the proceeds of the furniture which I sold you . . . the sole proceeds of my services during eighteen years and of those of my father during forty-eight. If my crop is good I will send a part of it to our brave and incomparable soldiers. Hail and fraternity."

He was still aggressive, and impetuous, and impudent —so filled with his republican prejudices—but under it all there was a hurt which the years were not to heal.

6

And he was terribly poor. "My loyalty has been proved by time," he once wrote in some notes, "my honesty by my poverty;" and also that "poverty brings no fear to a staunch soul; like death, it afflicts our friends much more than ourselves." And his friends had to help him a great deal, certainly during that summer of 1794.

In June, for instance, Bournonville was telling Cassan that Genet needed fifteen hundred dollars to pay for his house, "and as [Bournonville] knew that I had them he did not have to look far for them. . . . Take care of yourself, dear Citizen; be as happy as you deserve to be; may the amiable Cornelia soon consolidate your happiness and hers; and think sometimes of a man who loves you with a great deal of sincerity, and who desires nothing so much as your friendship." They were all very loyal to him, very fond of him. "I often think of you, dear Citizen," Cassan told him

in another letter, "and my daily wish is to be able to spend the rest of my life near you."

One man offered to lend him "all the money you may need;" Bournonville simply placed a part of his funds at Genet's disposal, without receipt and without interest. But Bournonville could get angry; as in August when Genet drew on him without warning up to a thousand *livres.* Bournonville was a boyhood friend, and he could speak out, and criticize Genet's hopeless inability to keep his private affairs in order, however exact he might be in public transactions. "Permit me," he wrote, "to beg you"—to beg thee, for Bournonville always used the intimate *tu*—"to be more careful in future in money matters and especially in your drafts on me, or I will be in a cruel position. My personal resources . . . do not permit me to face thoughtless demands." It had happened before in Paris, when a friend had been obliged to complain of a similar imposition, and had begged Genet to add economy to his other good qualities.

And Bournonville was worried about the marriage. "Consider that this affair drags," he had written in May. "It is with regret that I speak to you in such a tone. But what are we to augur from the continual delays inflicted on you, the pretexts for which appear to me so flimsy. The plan changes every week, it looks as though you were being led on, and this behaviour is calculated to alarm your real friends. I believe in Clinton's friendship for you, but if he is aware of your situation why does he so long postpone settling it. I hope that my fears are only imaginary and that you will soon have occasion to laugh at them. . . . Let the amiable Cornelia and my friend forgive me . . . my critical mood and my black ideas. I feel obliged to tell them every-

thing because they are . . . the most precious thing I possess in the world."

They were all devoted to Cornelia—"How estimable she is, this Cornelia, how deserving; yes, I vow her an eternal veneration"—but they were all very much mystified by the continual postponement of an event which they were all very eagerly awaiting. There was no hesitation on Cornelia's part, they all knew that. One of them had dined on one occasion "at the good Governor's," and "the absent friend" was discussed at length. "Eyes saddened by separation, became electrified at the thought of him. You are still more beloved today than yesterday; tomorrow you will be more beloved: distance and sadness strengthen afflicted passions." They had sung the *Marseillaise,* and the singer could not remember Genet's verses for the sailors. "Cornelia went off and in two jumps came back with the couplets written by the beloved poet." And the family were friendly. Madame Clinton had proposed Genet's health. The Governor had laughed when "a lady of the royal family of Rufus King wrote . . . that he must no longer dream of allowing a certain marriage since war between [France and America] was inevitable."

All this was very jolly, but why the delays? "It is not possible for me, my love," Cornelia wrote in July, "to explain to you my father's conduct, as I have not had courage enough to speak to him. Let me entreat you, my beloved Edmond, not to attribute this to any want of affection for you, but to a natural timidity which I cannot get the better of. . . . Be assured, my friend, Papa would never make a promise unless he intended to execute it."

It seems actually to have had to do with a slander propa-

gated, apparently, in Federalist circles, to the effect that Genet already had a wife in France. But "what harm," Bournonville was writing later, "does a little commotion in the world do to a rat in his cheese? He laughs at it, and if sometimes he is obliged to occupy himself with it, he returns into his hole as soon as possible. That is what I wish for you." Tranquillity, a retired life, and "the only evil," Bournonville smiled, "that I wish you is a wife to share . . . the pleasures of your hermitage."

It was done, finally, at the Governor's House; married on November 6, 1794, "by the Rev. Dr. Rodgers, Citizen Edmond Charles Genet, late Minister from the Republic of France, to Miss Cornelia Tappen Clinton, daughter of His Excellency George Clinton, Esquire, Governor of this State." Honest, faithful and sincere, they were to inscribe it in her epitaph, "she cheerfully retired with the man who had won her hand from the agitated scene of the world to the shades of a peaceful solitude." An American Lady on an American farm.

And Moissonnier was at it again right away—as soon as he could find a safe channel for his letter, for the Fauchet people were intercepting everything. Go home! "In marrying Cornelia, it was no doubt your intention to associate her with your triumphs. . . . The tigers have disappeared from the face of the earth"—*Thermidor* had come, and Robespierre was dead—"the axe of the law has struck the calumniators and the traitors; go then and receive from a Convention made up of virtuous and just men . . . that civic crown, precious testimonial to your virtues, to your patriotism and to your talents, and appear before Cornelia wearing this national recompense upon your brow. . . .

You must not live in obscurity and retirement; you must emerge in order to appear with more *éclat,* to enlighten your fellow citizens with new talents and render your country illustrious with new services."

But Genet was busy, buying ashes from Cassan for Cornelia's Farm. Two thousand bushels of ashes to be sent down from Albany by periagua—Cassan was up there, and disliking the proud Dutch families intensely—and "Adieu, dear Citizen, I embrace you with all my heart and beg you to believe that I will all my life preserve a very sincere friendship and a very real esteem for you." And many "honest messages" to "your beautiful and good wife."

In December, 1795, there was a son. "To wish him," Moissonnier declared, "the virtues and talents of his father, that is to wish his happiness." There were to be six children, boys and girls; one of them the great-grandfather of Edmond Charles Clinton Genet, the first American aviator killed in his country's uniform in France; another of them, Cornelia Tappen Clinton Genet, the mother of the present possessor of the Genet papers.

Some of the nephews and nieces to whom Madame Campan was to write, in 1820, to tell them the story of their other family in France, "which, in losing the support and counsels of your estimable father, has experienced a loss greater than all those to which it has been subjected by the events of the century."

CHAPTER IX

FORTY YEARS

1

GENET was just thirty-one when Fauchet arrived; he closed his career, and there remained to him forty years of life. In May of 1794 his three months' grace in which to report to the Convention were passed, he had outlawed himself because of Robespierre, and in July, Robespierre was on the scaffold. It might, after all, be possible to return to France.

"The downfall of your enemies," Moissonnier wrote in October, "will have doubtless made known to you the opinion which is now held of your civic virtue. . . . Letters which have been sent me [from Paris] tell us that justice is at last being rendered you, that people regret having believed your calumniators too readily, and that you are wanted in France by your friends and by all those who love their country." The marriage had put the matter out of mind for a while, but in the spring of 1795 Cassan had news. Pascal was set free; Mangourit was clerk in chief of a Foreign Ministry bureau; Pichon was employed by the Government; "I do not doubt that you will soon be completely avenged of the injustice done you." And Genet wanted to go; he wrote

of it to Cassan who "very much [feared] that a sentiment which no Frenchman can overcome will still call you back [to France]; if that were the case you can be very sure that you would not [go back] alone, and that no ties could keep me in America with you gone."

And in Paris, Siéyès had talked with Fulton, he had seen Genet's documents, the Committee, Genet afterwards recorded, had "proposed to recall me immediately with . . . Talleyrand." But Monroe was in France, in Morris's place, and Monroe would not permit it. Mangourit must not be sent to Philadelphia to succeed Fauchet—as the Convention was proposing—and Genet must not be allowed to return to France.

"I considered it my duty," Monroe explained it to Genet in 1800, "not to injure your fame or detract from your merit . . . but to anticipate and prevent . . . any ill effects which your collision with our Government might produce in the French councils." If Genet had returned he would have talked, and what he would have had to say would probably have "increased the jealousy which [France] then entertained of the views of [the American Government]." The Jay treaty was known, and France was not pleased. Monroe was there to preserve good feeling between France and America. "It was my desire and endeavor to dissipate completely all those jealousies. . . . Hence I was persuaded your return at the time might be injurious, and was in fact averse to it." He had not opposed it directly or indirectly. "When the subject was opened I always was silent, testifying in favor of your integrity only, and whence it was inferred, and truly, I was averse to your return at the time."

Aside from that, "as a friend to free government your

name will be recorded in the history of the present day, and your patient submission to the censures you incurred in the station of a frugal and industrious farmer will be a proof of the uprightness of your heart and integrity of your conduct while a victim of pure principles." And in 1800, "the whole of this has passed and is only recollected as interesting to ourselves. I too have had my day of suffering"—they had recalled him from France—"I served with zeal the cause of liberty and my country, and was requited by every act of injustice which could be rendered me, short of imprisonment and death. This too has passed, though it can never be recollected by me but with disgust."

It was an astonishing episode—Morris with his hints and Monroe with his silences—but Monroe was wrong, Genet declared. Mangourit despised the British faction but he was "warmly attached to the American patriots." And it was "remarkable as a subject of moral reflection that the Federal Cabinet"—Genet blamed them, of course—"after having traduced my character refused me defensive justice [against Jay and King], and . . . after having demanded my recall prevented secretly my return to France. But no immorality can excite wonder under British influence."

What was much more remarkable was that Monroe, knowing the picture of America that Genet must paint if he came back, did not dare to risk his return to France. But for Genet, in Paris, a splendid opportunity for rehabilitation had been lost.

2

Cornelia was sick—she was always in very delicate health—Cassan's letters were full of it. He was at Albany, and

"your society or your letters have for a long time already constituted the only attractions which America can have in my eyes." He had purchased some lots on the Hudson, "on one of which I am about to have a little cabin built, of which one of the cells will be named the grotto of friendship; you know well enough that its use is destined to no one but you." For Cassan was very lonely for his friend; "I enjoy myself here sometimes, but I am often enough bored."

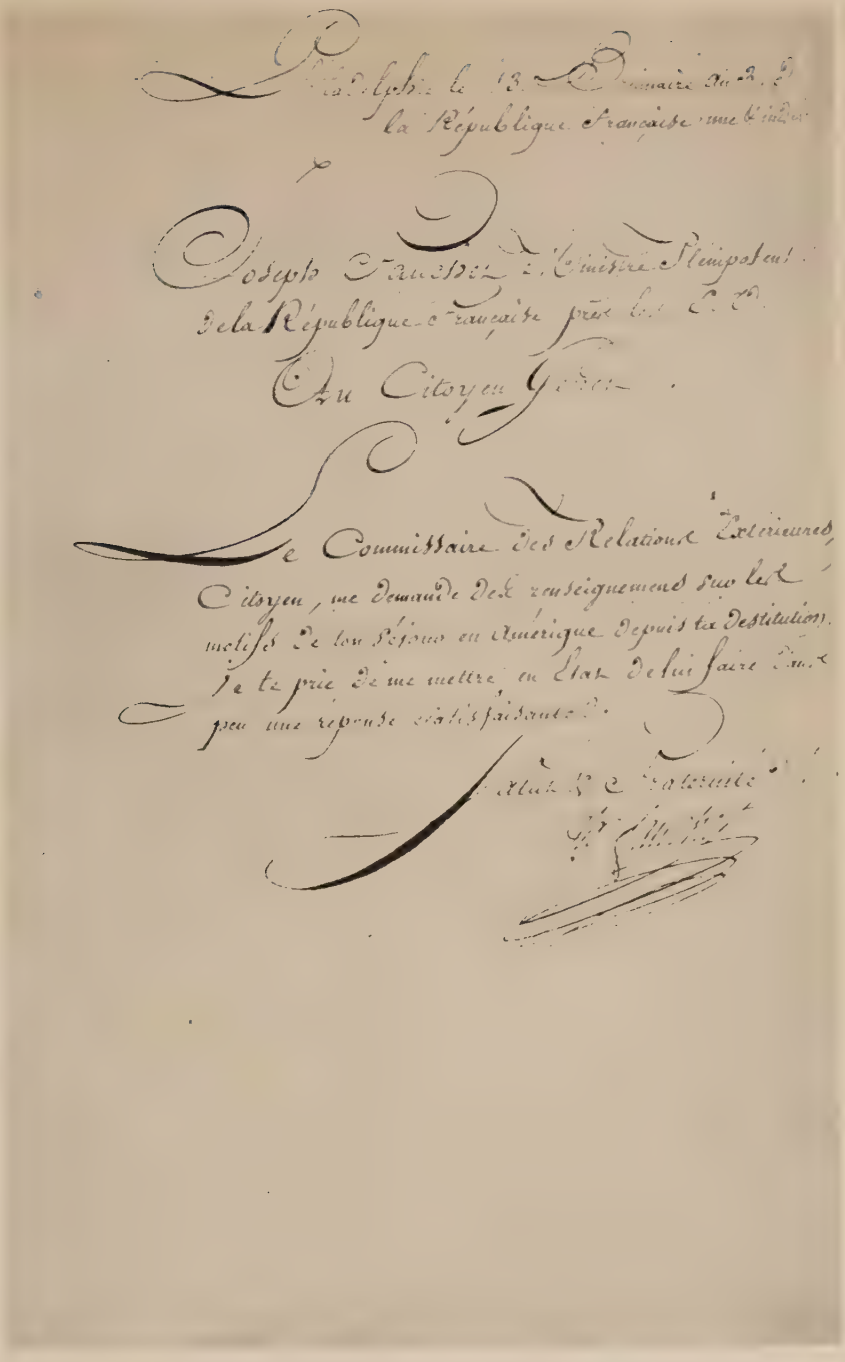
At home, poor Adelaïde had destroyed herself; in 1796, Madame Genet was dead. Good Citizen Bonnet could be relieved of his duties so faithfully performed "in stormy and barbarous times." Whatever estate there might be must go to Madame Campan. She was trying to run a school for young ladies at St. Germain, the Seminary of the Mountain of Good Air, but it was very difficult to manage as so many of the pupils paid only with fuel or provisions. Bournonville was in France, "pursuing hares at Compiègne." Pichon was busy under the *Directoire* and discouraged. "France still lives on men"—Bonaparte was at the wars in Italy—"She does not devour them as formerly, but she consumes them. . . . Happy the man who like you is not thrown or drawn by necessity into the flaming orbit in which our Republic revolves. It rolls along, it achieves revolution. The astonished nations admire it. It is only we who see the unhappy multitudes which it sacrifices and crushes. . . . Never was [France] so powerful. . . . France rules. . . . All these prodigies are accomplished without any finances, without any system of administration." If Genet were to return, he would be well received, "but you are too wise, I am sure, to dream of embarking again upon the stormy sea in which we navigate." Stay in America.

Pascal was in Santo Domingo, working for the Government. "I will not tell you again what I suffered . . . in any case I have been well repaid by the . . . justice rendered to us. . . . Always on the eve of ascending the scaffold, I put my hand on my conscience and I was calm. All our friends have perished, but their memory is avenged. . . . Here, as in France, we are poor." And "give me news of you, love me, write to me often, tell me that you are happy, or else assure me that I will have the happiness of seeing you here."

And to Pichon Genet wrote that ambition no longer exercised any power over his soul. But there was one which his heart had not renounced, "it is to see my country, which I cherish and which I shall never abjure, entirely disabused by official and public reports concerning the atrocious lies which have been the cause of my ruin and have prevented me from serving it. . . . This act of justice is due me and [I owe it to my son] to solicit it if there is not sufficient virtue in the Government to forestall the complaints of oppressed innocence."

For forty years that one idea filled his mind. To be called home, perhaps, at least to be acquitted of his disgrace.

And Madame Campan was doing her best in Paris to have her brother brought back, but in 1797 Pichon thought it impossible. No one knew where Europe was going. France was in a turmoil, "how, or when it will settle, God knows!" The elections threatened a return of 1793, "but the *Directoire* is strong, and when one can handle Europe the way it does one ought to be able to handle interior affairs." The American Commissioners were in Paris—Pinckney, Marshall and Gerry—and Pichon, viewing them



FAUCHET, MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY TO THE UNITED STATES, TO GENET

Demanding an explanation of Genet's continued sojourn in America after his recall. Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the Genet papers.

through the eyes of the Foreign Ministry, had no use for them. They "cringe, scrape and stoop, and do nothing. Two of them will soon get off, I hope. Why, these fellows came to ask reparations"—for maritime outrages committed by France—"and that with a very high tone too, while they [ought] to give us many; but they were soon put right." So Pichon saw the transactions made necessary by the recent French depredations upon American commerce, and which were to result in the XYZ intrigue of Talleyrand, the "millions for defense" slogan and eventual hostilities on the sea between France and America.

It was evident that official France now detested America, and for that the experience of the French Ministers in America and the nature of Jay's treaty with England were responsible. An astonishing treaty, actually, which angered even Hamilton—although he got himself stoned in the streets of New York defending it—and infuriated France. A treaty which gave to England all the advantages formerly allotted to France, in return for practically nothing. An amazing Federalist instrument which seemed to corroborate everything that any Frenchman had ever said concerning the anglomania of the Federal Government. A document which had moved Pascal to remark that it would not be surprising if Washington ended his days as a pensioner of England.

But Pichon's letter infuriated Genet. With the rising antagonism towards France in America, Genet was in a difficult position; with the actual prospect of war and the adoption of the Alien and Sedition laws he was in a critical one. Letters such as Pichon's—and he was sending some stupid pamphlets too—if intercepted might expose Genet to severe prosecution. "Instead of writing to me about poli-

tics," Genet informed him, "in which I take no part except as a patriotic spectator, you would have pleased me more by telling me . . . why you consider impossible the act of justice which my family has requested, which I am now myself requesting, and which present circumstances . . . make most urgently necessary."

3

It was a very serious emergency for Genet. The country was roaring, Congress seething, the presses boiling with violent pamphlets, a riot of enthusiasm was sweeping the land—frigates, armies, generals, Washington, Hamilton, mobs, songs, parades—the Federalists were triumphant, the Republicans furious. Genet, Fauchet, Adet, treaties, privateers, England and France, the *Directoire* and the Commissioners, and Jefferson Vice-President—it had come to this. John Adams's French War. For they fought; on the sea they fought; they were still fighting in 1800. The *Constitution* and the *Insurgente,* the *Constellation* and the *Vengeance;* Truxtun, Bainbridge, Hull, the Decaturs; practising on France for 1812. *Hail Columbia* and the black cockades, while the Republicans screamed at the "war hawks" and burned the President in effigy. Poor "Johnny at the helm of State." But the other chorus was louder, for a while.

"Yankee Doodle—mind the tune—
Yankee Doodle Dandy,
If Frenchmen come we'll mind the tune,
And spank them hard and handy!"

Rabbles and rum, and all the guns and bells again the other way around, and a hounding of French partisans.

Conspiracies and hubbubs. Young Mr. Lee at Boston in 1798—Mr. William Lee—with "large packets" of doubtless seditious matter from France addressed to "Jefferson, Monroe, Randolph, Genet . . . Burr, Bache and several members of Congress." The "leaders of our Jacobin faction." The packets "to Genet and Jefferson were large," Stephen Higginson was reporting to Pickering, "and no doubt contained some new schemes of Talleyrand's." They had been seen and poked into—at Lee's lodging, and "some of them contained pamphlets . . . abusing our Executive most infamously." It would be wise "to intercept the packets to Jefferson, Monroe and Randolph;" it might lead to "important discoveries" and help to "detect conspiracies." But Lee handed over his packets to Wolcott, and Higginson found that he was not "improperly connected with the French Government." The common idea at Boston, "that Mr. Lee had been seduced to take charge of packets of seditious papers" was not just. All that in a month.

But still, there it was; Talleyrand and his pamphlets, like Pichon and his letters. Genet could be "apprehended" for that sort of thing, he could be "restrained, secured and removed," he could be deported as an alien enemy—and if he were deported to France he was an outlaw when he landed.

"Persecutions, injustices and evils, my dear angel," he notified Madame Campan, "have not been able to destroy my abandoned, betrayed, outraged patriotism. It has been impossible . . . to cease considering myself a French citizen, and these sentiments . . . expose me to new storms. A state of war . . . cruel and heartless laws against Frenchmen . . . place my fate in the hands of a single man, and

that man, John Adams, must be my enemy as are all the enemies of my country. The French for whom I sacrificed and ruined myself . . . might have saved me from this situation if they had had more regard for your just representations." Genet himself had appealed to the *Directoire* and "if I am obliged to leave America [without any answer] I do not know to what land I will offer my life, that of my wife and of my children. That dear Cornelia, who joins in love to [you] and to all the family, is determined to share my fate, let it be what it will please God, his angels or his devils. . . . Adieu. [Whatever happens, *erased*] be sure of your brother's tenderest attachment."

But Genet was wrong about John Adams, and found it out later. The man who had first seen Genet when he was a boy at Versailles had no intention of expelling him from America. He took the pains at a dinner in New York, in the presence of Edward Livingston, to remark that Genet would be the last one against whom the laws would be invoked, as he, Adams, could never forget the marks of kindness that he had received in France from the Genet family.

So that a little bread did come back on the waters.

4

Of course Genet took some precautions. He appeared at the Consulate in New York—accompanied by General Gates, Commodore Nicholson, Brockholst Livingston, Senator Gelston and George Clinton to vouch for him—obtained a certificate of residence and satisfactory conduct, and deposed that "my unquenchable patriotism, and my unshakeable attachment to the reasonable, just and glorious cause in

which France has drawn the sword, have survived everything."

And he wrote to the *Directoire.* It was the third of his long vindicating briefs—twenty-two pages this time, and long paragraphs omitted in the final draft—recapitulating his entire career and submitting his claims to the consideration of his Government. And another fling at Robespierre—"unfortunately Washington's entreaties [for Genet's recall] were received by Robespierre, seated upon the corpses of my friends, and this monster in human form, admiring in the silence of his somber ambition an executive power to the level of which he hoped soon to raise himself in France . . . hastened, without investigation, without enquiry, without judgment—solely upon the demand of a man irritated by the popularity of our principles which were undermining the foundations of his projects—to desert me on the breach"; at a time when "only a sign of approbation from France was needed in order to win a complete victory" in America.

What Genet had to say in his own defense does not require to be repeated; the paragraphs already quoted from his 1797 letter to Jefferson—the second of the briefs—are sufficiently indicative of the nature of all his memorials. The popular support of France in America; the anglomania of the Federal Government; the repudiation of the French treaties and the later acceptance of Jay's English one; the falsity of the Federalist slander promulgated by Jay and King; the treachery of France herself in sacrificing him to Washington in the face of his instructions. What needs rather to be examined is the advice that he gave to the *Directoire* in connection with its quarrel with America; and certain bitter passages eventually left out of the final draft.

And as for the *Directoire,* the truth was that "our hesitations alone caused the Americans to go off their course"; that "our enemies have cleverly taken advantage of our continual contradictions to seize the ground which we occupied"; and that by following now "the prompting of an only too well justified resentment we would only be furnishing means to the [English] agents to abuse more and more of the inexperience and passions of [the American] people." France's behavior now towards America would decide whether America would fall entirely into British hands. And perhaps America deserved to. "We opened up the future before their eyes, they stubbornly limited their view to the narrow circle of the present. We tried to place them at the head of the political system in the new world, they went and put themselves at the tail of the system of a government [England] which is collapsing. We offered them glory, they chose money. . . . But never mind. Let us draw a veil over these nudities of a generation whose old habits we neglected to break." Nature had decreed that America was to absorb all of England's commerce, and to cause England "to be inhabited only by coastwise traders, fishermen and pirates. Let that be our vengeance, let us allow her to act, that nature all powerful, let us no longer impede her progress."

And then these remarkable sentences—trenchant sentences sprung from an infinite disillusionment, and all of them erased—the prophetic significance of which, pruned of their verbiage, still preserves an arresting vitality.

"It is money that [the Americans] must have, let us allow them to enrich themselves . . . let us allow their richly loaded ships to attract by the bait of profit almost all

the sailors of George III. Let us allow them . . . to carry . . . to the nabobs of Bengal the crowned portraits of Washington and John Adams. Let us allow them to create a military navy which will not be long in compromising them with [the English] the tyrants of the seas. Those miserable English, knowing [the Americans'] weaknesses, have never ceased to talk to them of money, to agitate in front of them the purse of blind fortune. They [the English] have even had enough influence over the old Washington to cause him to tell a young people, whose character it was his duty to form, that innumerable [English maritime] insults had been compensated by immense profits. Well then, Citizen Director, let us allow that same passion, which we are no longer in a position to cure, to avenge us. . . . Let us allow the Americans to enrich themselves. Do not doubt it, they are lost sheep that our cries and our threats will always drive further away."

For himself Genet asked "reparation of the injustice which has overwhelmed me, which oppresses my heart night and day, and spoils all the happiness which I might enjoy in the bosom of my family." Fortune lacking, he would like at least to leave to his sons "the reputation of being descended from a French republican blameless in the eyes of his country." Let the *Directoire* consider his long service to France, his instructions which he had done nothing but obey, Fauchet's orders to have him executed, "and declare whether [the *émigré* law] shall strike me. . . . A government exists only through its agents. If it abandons them when they devote themselves to its glory, it abandons and betrays itself."

5

It was Cassan who took the letter to France for Madame Campan to present, and the *Directoire* was favorable. Cassan reported that "Merlin said 'Let Genet return, he has been useful to us and can be again.' Talleyrand said 'I have been thought to be the enemy of Genet, I am not, I will see him with pleasure and I will serve him as much as I can.' " Cassan could declare that "you are ardently desired by your family and equally so as a public man by the majority of the men [in power]. . . . I think you will be happier in France than in America." Without counting on anything, "you must prepare your return."

And later, "how happy I am to be able to announce to you that justice is at last to be rendered you." There was to be a decree stating that Genet's absence was not an emigration, that his property was to be released, and "there, I think, is what you wanted. . . . They have done more: you are enjoined to return to France within three months of the notification of the decree. . . . I think that you are the only person to whom so complete a justice has been rendered in such a manner. . . . Your whole family awaits you with the greatest impatience."

Talleyrand wrote, the *Directoire* added its invitation, and the thing was done. Come back to France. But Genet did not go. That was not enough, and he was not satisfied. "My heart," he told the King of France in 1831, "was too profoundly wounded to be satisfied with any reparation which was not proportionate to the outrage that I had received. I did not think it possible to serve honorably in the career of diplomacy . . . before having been rehabilitated in the very place where I had been so to speak disgraced: it

is [in America] that I had received the affront, it is here that it had to be effaced." Genet was positive that John Adams would have been willing to see him restored to his post in America if it had been proved to him, Adams, that Genet's previous conduct had been "the passive result of my orders."

Actually, one rather suspects that Genet was rapidly falling into the "persecuted" state of mind. He had broken a law, and that law had been set aside for him, and he was at liberty to return to France and again take up his work, if that was what he wanted. But now he wanted something else; he wanted to be rehabilitated in America; and one is forced to the conclusion that Genet did not really want to return to France at all. He wrote long memorials asking for justice, but when it was done him as handsomely as could be expected, he would not accept it. He was forming a habit of injured martyrdom which perhaps never quite left him. He refused when Talleyrand invited him, he was later to refuse a similar invitation from Napoleon. "Neither the *Directoire,*" he explained to the King, "nor all [the governments] that followed it, inspired in me the desire to claim my rights and enter the service again. I do not like either anarchists, or tyrants, or usurpators."

As a matter of fact, the truth was probably to be read in that other sentence in the King's letter, in which Genet admitted that "I was finding too much delight in the charms of rural life to renounce it." And it is true that until 1831 he does not appear to have agitated the question again. On the contrary, in a very few years he was to become an American citizen, sponsored by De Witt Clinton and Lieutenant Governor Broome; at a function attended—so family

tradition asserts—by Hamilton, of all people, who is said to have remarked that it was a notable event and a compliment to American institutions. Genet himself once called it a "moral suicide."

It was certainly, in a sense, an appeal to the American people.

6

The chronology of these recent pages has passed over the letter of 1797 to Jefferson. Frequent quotations have already been made from it, and the complete letter—printed in full in the Appendix—deserves to be read again in the exact form in which Genet composed it, since it represents his own very plain statement of his opinion of Jefferson and of the treatment which he received at the latter's hands.

Thirty-eight pages reviewing Genet's entire diplomatic career—"I had seemed the most proper personage to reside near the fathers of our liberty [the Americans], to study it in their school, to negotiate with you who were spoken of to me as a guardian angel whom those fathers had sent to us to show us the way to the promised land"—thirty-eight pages commenting on Jefferson's career—"I only knew you, Sir . . . from the useful, however timid, role that you had played in the American Revolution"—setting forth certain other matters for which a little space must be found.

The letter had been made necessary because of a speech in Congress by Mr. Giles, in which he had attacked Genet's conduct as Minister, referred to his "appeal to the people," and enlarged upon the execration and the disdain which had been loaded upon him by the American nation. "Quiet and content in my peaceful retreat," Genet told Jefferson,

"occupying myself only with agricultural labors, with literary amusement, all my politics limited to enjoying . . . the successes of my country," he had had no intention of writing to Jefferson; but Giles's speech had to be answered, and "it is to you [Jefferson] yourself that I decided to address myself, as to my principal accuser, as to the ostensible mouthpiece of the Federal Government in its dealings with me, as to the real author of all my ills." There is the sentence that sums it up.

Since people were taking pleasure "in turning the knife in the wounds which I received struggling for my country; since after having vanquished me by causing me to be deserted . . . by my own people, they insult . . . what is left of me forgotten in this foreign land, I have no counsel to take but that of despair; alone, having no support but my innocence, no weapon but the truth, I will advance fearlessly against the powerful band of my declared enemies and of my false friends, against you, against all those who made themselves my accusers; [I will] summon them to produce proofs of everything that has been alleged about me and to answer what I shall depose upon the registers of history. I owe it to my son, to the respectable family which has [received] me . . . to my fatherland which is still being deceived, and to the hospitable country which covered me with the ægis of its laws when mine that I was serving wished them violated in order to assassinate me."

One can see why the Republican politicians were not anxious to have this letter published during the presidential campaign of 1800. Before it closed, it made something quite small of the Mammoth of Democracy.

And after listening to Jefferson, after having been

"initiated" by him in all the "secrets" of the Cabinet, what had Genet done—he had "given the firmest tone to my official correspondence. I considered the proclamation of neutrality, and all the decisions, addresses and answers that followed it, as opinions only, because ratified treaties are obligatory laws which can only be annulled by war [or by new treaties]." He had demanded from all authorities the observance of the treaties. He had instructed his subordinates to avoid any appearance of interference with the internal affairs of the country—and just there in the letter Bournonville would perhaps have advised him to go a little easy!

Well, Genet had retired to his farming, and his philosophy, and, he declared, "I would to God, Sir, that doing more justice to your talents you had also consecrated to the cult of the sciences the balance of your life after having labored to establish the independence of the United States. I wish that all the other envoys of the Federal Government had done the same." If they had only stayed away from France! "France would then perhaps have passed without any suspended motion from one energetic government to another. The blood of the Bourbons [banished] would not have flowed upon the scaffold. The French people . . . would have restrained Europe and found allies; millions of men would still be living for agriculture and the arts; Poland would not be destroyed; and the United States, having conducted themselves strictly as an association of industrious merchants and peaceable farmers who prefer the horn of plenty to the trumpet of fame, would not have drawn upon themselves the resentment of all parties . . . in France, and which have all been equally deceived."

And the resentment of Spain "whom your dreams about

Kentucky"—so Jefferson had dreamed about Kentucky—"must have . . . singularly alarmed in spite of all the mammoth bones that you are now sending there like relics to calm her; of the northern courts that think nothing . . . of your commentaries on Vattel . . . finally of that man whose very name today presents the collective idea of all the stupidities and all the perfidies—of Pitt."

And in conclusion, "I, who have been represented as an anarchist, a partisan, a disorganizer, I am ready to prove juridically . . . that during my mission to the United States—limiting myself to a defense of the rights and interests of my country—I did not interfere in any way with the internal affairs of this one"—again Bournonville would have told him to leave that out, since his instructions had ordered him so to interfere—"that my first dealings with the people were actually the work of the Government's agents . . . that I observed towards President Washington all the regard due to his character and to his position; that the fable of my appeal to the people is an insidious artifice and a perfidious lie; finally that France and America . . . ought to give me . . . a reparation as brilliant as the outrages which I endured . . . were bloody, if governments possessed enough virtue or enough leisure to seek out unhappy zeal, oppressed innocence, persecuted patriotism. *Salut.*"

One ought, perhaps, to leave him there; but with the writing of that letter, on July 4, 1797, there remained to him, almost to a day, thirty-seven years to live.

7

And yet there is very little left to record. He drops out of the national scene. Later on, someone seeing him

at an inn was to observe that "at present he is an almost unnoticed individual; though his politeness in this land without manners will cause him to be remarked at least during his seat at the dinner table."

Friends from France came and went—even La Fayette came, in 1824, to shake hands—always with letters and packages. "Of how many persons [does] your family now [consist] . . . and is the last arrival a boy or a girl? You understand that without answers to such questions I cannot present myself before your sisters!" Madame Campan was doing very well, all of a sudden. Napoleon had sent her his step-daughter, Hortense, and almost overnight the Seminary of the Mountain of Good Air had become fashionable. The Pinckney girls came, Eliza Monroe came—in 1802, when Monroe was again in Paris, talking to Talleyrand about Louisiana—and very soon everybody came; all the daughters of Napoleon's new imperial nobility, to learn from the lady who had been at Versailles just how to behave like a duchess, or a princess, or even a queen.

And Napoleon himself came. Or rather his own carriage, but probably without the Mamelukes, to fetch Madame Campan imperially to the Tuileries. The Tuileries —she had not been there since August 10, 1792. "Whilst I am . . . lamenting in silence in my humble retreat," Genet wrote in 1804, "the destruction of liberty in France and the establishment of monarchy"—it *was* disconcerting, so soon —"I receive from my family letters [that] mention the personal advantages they derive from the new government." And Napoleon had kept Madame Campan to dinner with the Empress, and what he wanted from her was "some information . . . concerning the etiquette of the old Court,"

How to behave like an emperor and empress when one was really only a Corsican general and a Creole lady.

Madame Campan was to be the governess of the imperial children—if only Josephine would hurry up about it—and her son was to be auditor of the Council. The whole family was in clover because the new empire needed a school mistress. Mr. Auguié—Adelaïde's widowed husband—had been instructed not to dispose of his daughter Adele's hand because Napoleon meant to establish her himself, and Genet was wondering if Napoleon was intending her for brother Jerome whose American marriage the Emperor refused to recognize. And Napoleon had married off another of the Auguié girls, Aglaé, to Ney, and made him a marshal. "The fairest of the fair to the bravest of the brave," the Emperor had said. Poor Ney, who was to be shot during the Bourbon "White Terror" after Waterloo—and in the Genet family, certainly, there was no knowledge of the recurring American legend of his survival and escape to Charleston.

And in 1804 Genet thought that "all that is very brilliant, but frightful and alarming in a state of things so precarious." He himself would have nothing to do with it, he was always very sarcastic about his family's imperial prosperity, and his "attachment for the United States has increased with my affections, my interests and my habits." But it must have been pleasant, just the same, to know that good sister Campan was out of the woods, her school flourishing, herself restored to ways of ease and dignity. She was never to be the governess of the imperial children, but her schoolroom was a nursery of eminent young ladies, one hundred of them in 1806; in 1807 she was put in charge of the Emperor's foundation for young ladies at Ecouen, she lived

to see the return of her precious Bourbons—Monsieur, and Artois, and Madame Royale—and in the end she retired, greatly respected and much beloved. And in 1822 she died.

Always loyal and affectionate towards her brother, although there was a period of years during the early Napoleonic era when he would not even write to her. "I have not written to you at all for three years," he finally admitted. "To you whom I cherish . . . to you who do not cease to write me the most tender letters in spite of my apparent coldness. Without indignation and without ceasing to love me, learn the explanation of this astonishing silence. I tried—shall I say it—I tried to forget you in order to forget my ungrateful and perfidious country. . . ."

It had come to that, but Cornelia put an end to it. She coaxed him, and argued with him, and placed the pen in his reluctant hand. The letters began to come again to France from the American farm.

8

Genet had always hankered after the Hudson, and in 1800 they moved from Cornelia's Farm; up to a place called Prospect Hill, just outside the village of Greenbush, near Albany. Cornelia was not well; her health did not improve; and in 1810 she died. Four years later Genet was married again; to Martha Brandon Osgood, the daughter of Samuel Osgood, once Postmaster General of the United States. There were a daughter and four sons, one of them George Clinton Genet—it was a habit in those days to name children after relatives by a former marriage, and Martha herself was so named for her father's first wife—George Clinton

Ministère de la Police générale de la République.

Liberté. Egalité.

Extrait des Registres des Délibérations du Directoire exécutif.

Paris, le 5e. Germinal l'an 5e. de la République française, une et indivisible.

Le Directoire exécutif

Sur la réclamation de Edmond Charles Genet, tendante à obtenir la radiation de son nom de la liste des emigrés; ensemble les pieces à l'appui de la réclamation;

Ouï le Ministre de la Police Générale,

Arrête: Art. 1er.

Le nom de Edmond Charles Genet est définitivement rayé de toutes listes d'emigrés où il auroit pu être inscrit, et son absence ne sera pas réputée émigration.

Art. 2

Le séquestre apposé sur les biens meubles & immeubles sera levé, s'il n'est pris d'Emigré, avec la restitution des fruits et la jouissance des dits

THE MINISTRY OF POLICE, GOVERNMENT OF THE DIRECTOIRE, TO GENET

First page of the edict removing Genet's name from the list of the proscribed. The amnesty was not accepted by Genet. Now reproduced for the first time from the original in the possession of the Library of Congress.

Genet who was to record his father's reminiscences, transcribe many of his notes and furnish important portions of the Genet papers.

The Citizen kept busy. One hears him singing in his woods; one learns of him serving on committees and addressing memorials to Legislatures—the maritime defenses of New York harbor, the abolition of imprisonment for debt, the development of canal facilities, the prevention of epidemics; one sees him inventing a life boat, and fenders for the bows of river steamers, and a balloon propelled by steam; one may read his studious little pamphlets—on public health, on *The Means of opening new Sources of Wealth for the Northern States,* on *The Upward Forces of Fluids and their applicability to several Arts.* One finds him securing the manuscript from the widow of Chief Justice Yates and editing the *Secret Proceedings and Debates of the Convention assembled at Philadelphia in the year 1787 for the purpose of forming the Constitution of the United States of America;* sending a copy to President Monroe, and erasing a paragraph informing him that "had the French Republic been composed like ours of respectable States instead of impotent little Departments . . . she might have put down the bloody tyranny of the City of Paris, resisted the double usurpations of Bonaparte, and settled down progressively under a [limited monarchy, or single executive, or mediator . . . *erased*] federal government."

Always he was poor, the farm "heavily mortgaged and encumbered with debts." In 1832, "to tell you the truth," he wrote to his niece, Aglaé Ney, "honors without emoluments would not soften my distress. If it was not thought proper to reinstate me here as Minister, I would consent to

accept the post of Consul General . . . or even that of mere Consul at New York." He was then sixty-nine years old.

He had written to the King of France about it in 1831. The last of the memorials, presented by Madame Ney; all of his career again—fourteen pages this time, and the handwriting not so firm—all of the old griefs, Jefferson "that timid and slightly perfidious philosopher," the "ferocious proceedings" of Robespierre, the recital of his financial claims never settled. It took a little doing, this appeal to a Bourbon king from the patriot of 1792, the Girondist apostle of republican liberty; but this was the Orleans Louis Philippe, the son of that "Equality Philip" who had voted the death of Louis XVI, a veteran of the armies of the young Republic, a monarch who had "deigned to enrich and fortify his diadem with the titles of Citizen and Republican"—and so *Vive le Roi!* The circle of History was squared, and Genet was His Majesty's "very humble and very obedient servitor."

But his claims were no longer valid, they told him. Everything prior to 1800 was cancelled, and his length of diplomatic service was not sufficient legally to entitle him to a pension. They could only "seize . . . the first occasion to submit [Genet's] title [to an honorable recompense] to His Majesty." And Genet hoped that this recompense would come to him in the form of an appointment to a mission in America, "founded upon the unalterable basis of friendship and reciprocity." There would be no obstacle on the part of the American Government. Van Buren and Edward Livingston were friends; Genet had always been associated with republican politics; President Jackson—to whom Genet had just sent a medal of Cæsar as a New

Year's gift—was all kindness and favor. If the King approved, Genet would be grateful for the opportunity "of repairing under the direction of [a prudent French] administration . . . the errors which I may have committed under the impulse of the revolutionary government."

It was his only assumption of any blame.

9

Nothing came of it, of course. What he considered "the injustice of his country towards him," Martha Genet informed Madame Ney, "after the most notorious services, had diminished his affection for France." He felt himself so much injured "that he almost wished to avoid mankind; therefore this place [Prospect Hill] surrounded by woods, at a distance from the metropolis, suited him better than any other. How often have I grieved that his splendid talents should be buried in obscurity."

And on July 14, Bastille Day, 1834, he died, in his seventy-second year.

"Under this humble stone," they wrote, "are interred the remains of Edmond Charles Genet, late Adjutant General, Minister Plenipotentiary and Consul General from the French Republic to the United States of America. He was born at Versailles, Parish of St. Louis, in France, January 8, 1763, and died at Prospect Hill, Town of Greenbush, July 14, 1834. Driven by the storms of the Revolution to the shades of retirement, he devoted his talents to his Adopted Country where he cherished the love of liberty and virtue. The pursuits of literature and science enlivened his peaceful solitude, and he devoted his life to usefulness and benevolence. His last moments were like his life, an example

of fortitude and true Christian philosophy. His heart was love and friendship's sun, which has set on this transitory World, to rise with radiant splendor beyond the grave."

Adieu Genet.

10

People had almost forgotten what it was that he had done; they were later only to recall the things that he did not do.

One has purposely let him talk in these pages, burn up the paper to his heart's content, dash off his great sounding sentences. Others have had their unhindered fling at him; it was time for him to have his say. He wrote, of course, with the bombastic, redundant, theatrical French and American pens of his day; much has often been made of his more violent passages; actually he was completely conventional in his style, he used all the proper republican words, he repeated all the correct patriotic phrases, he proclaimed all the cherished popular banalities, he employed all the accepted personal invectives. But there is a quality to it, surely—whatever the nature of his particular argument—a vigor, and a fire, and a breathlessness of conviction to it, which run through the paragraphs like the warmth of fine cordials exhilarating the senses. Almost always when he speaks there is excitement, and commotion, and furore. One hears cheers always at the end, and there are hats in the air.

Too much excitement, too much furore. He was indiscreet, he was irritable, he was headlong, he was sarcastic, he was on occasions deliberately insulting. He was not always consistent, he piled up his arguments to fit the case, he trimmed his utterances and his politics to suit the time. He

had once, of necessity, abandoned one King of France; he could be, in necessity, the "very humble servitor" of another. But he was not humble; he was by nature excessively haughty, cocksure, impertinent. Perhaps rather obsessed with flamboyant griefs, facile suspicions, indiscriminate and superficial accusations. His underlings were public pests; much of his following was from the disorderly rabbles—the disorderly Jeffersonian rabbles that were soon to drive out the Federalists. All these things are true—no one would dream of denying them—and how well they have been remembered against him. And because of them how easily he is insulted. Genet the lunatic, the madman, the mountebank, the boor, mouthing, and capering, and gesticulating. And that is nonsense.

He was extremely well educated, extremely well bred, extremely well mannered. He had in him France, and behind him Versailles. He brought with him a knowledge of the world, a knowledge of literature, a knowledge of scientific speculation which Washington, for instance, or Hamilton, or even the philosophical Jefferson could not approximate. He brought with him a habit of industry, a capacity for effort, a genius in enterprise, an alertness of mind which had the Philadelphia Cabinet twittering. He was anything but a clown in America; he was the greatest danger that ever menaced the country, since the things that he wanted—the things that they had told him to achieve, the things that he expected from America because in his father's day America had signed her name to some promises—those things were not peaceful, or safe, or complacent. They were the things, it seemed, that America could not afford to do.

Standing with both feet upon his treaties, speaking his mind, composing his biting logic, always obedient to his instructions, he came within weeks of changing the course of history in the new world. He brought trouble, and perplexity, and a great stirring of hearts; he brought France and the Revolution—he talked, wrote, thought, conspired for France in America against England, and that was his duty, his entrusted task and his sole responsibility—he fought every inch of the way for the rights of his country; with Jefferson at his ear he sounded the charge—often improperly, that is granted—against the tendencies of a Federal authority which was to accept the Jay treaty with England—as complete a breach of its precious neutrality as could under the circumstances have been contrived—and he left behind him the legacy of a powerful, disciplined, assertive republican party coming to maturity under the inspiration of his presence, the tutelage of his exhortation. Bringing Jefferson, his evil genius, in time to the President's chair; Jefferson who had used him as standard bearer, played him for a political dupe and then discarded him.

They ruined him for it. Jefferson—secret manipulator of revolution in France, anonymous instigator of opposition in America—Jefferson trembled when the noise of his men in the street, taught by Genet, came roaring; the occasion for leadership in the forenoon of battle sent him to Monticello; and he abandoned Genet with a piece of treacherous writing. Hamilton seized upon it, shrewdly; Washington flew into reactionary tempers; Jay and King spread it with solemnity; and the Federalists were saved. In France, there was Robespierre. And Gouverneur Morris. Later, in Philadelphia, there was Randolph; and John Jay in London.

It was something to remember, and brood over, and become hopelessly embittered about, at Cornelia's Farm and at Prospect Hill, for the next forty years.

11

It was all a mistake, and in the beginning, in 1792, Genet had sensed it. There was a dream in France, a Crèvecœur, Brissot, Girondist dream, about America. A dream of Franklin, and Jefferson, and Washington; of liberty and fraternity; of gratitude—although they admitted the former duplicity of royal France—of a community of French and American interests; of a common hatred of England; of a great, brotherly, simple, rustic American heart beating for France, for the rights of man which Jefferson and Franklin had taught them, for the armed struggle of a young republic such as Washington in his day had endured, for the Revolution which America had inspired. A great, sturdy, homespun, embattled farmer's, American heart beating against England, because once that emotion had prevailed. A dream.

They did not understand at all, in France. That the Americans, the ruling Federalists, of 1792 were Anglo-Saxons; that the so called Revolution against England had been nothing more than one of the Anglo-Saxons' family quarrels, the psychological whimsicalities of which no European nation has ever understood; that Anglo-Saxons have a way of doing things and that it is not the Latin way, however much minority bell ringing and gun booming may be going on in the streets; that the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States were two entirely different documents; that Washington, for one, was an

Englishman long before he became an American; that liberty and equality, in America, were calm, almost abstract, legal and not social virtues; something to inscribe proudly on paper, to enjoy decorously and in prudently restricted political ways, without any particular practical regard for the theoretical generalities of Jefferson's preamble; not, as in France, a magnificent malady of the mind, a superb intoxication of the spirit, a universal personal possession levelling the injustices of Society; something to carry beyond the frontiers, a gift to all nations to be borne to them at the point of the sword, for the good of their souls, the ultimate happiness of mankind and the glory of France the Emancipator. Another dream. The dream of an essentially military people aroused to a delirium of energy.

It was not enough to have the Revolution in France; it must be achieved everywhere else, in England for instance, in Ireland—the French were very much concerned over Ireland—in the Spanish dominions, anywhere that despots sat on thrones. In America, if Washington turned out to be a despot. And France would know, for France was "the model and terror of the world." And France must always be preaching, proselyting, stirring up the people against their rulers, undermining the foundations of tyranny, upsetting, disrupting, instigating, encouraging. Inevitably her agents were disturbers, since the thing that they represented was disturbance itself, upheaval, reconstruction, in their own country and in every other.

The analogy in all this to modern Russia is obvious. To governments of 1793 opposed to such disruption—to conservative, prosperous, orderly Anglo-Saxons, for instance—French diplomatic agents of the Revolution appeared in pre-

cisely the same light as have certain representatives of the Soviet Republic to similar current governments, to the French Government of 1927 itself. So Genet undoubtedly appeared to Washington, to Hamilton, to all the Federalists, guardians of the American established order, of Anglo-Saxon law, and property, and financial security. So he eventually appeared even to Jefferson and to some of the American republicans whose experimental bolshevism was not as advanced as all that.

It was not so much that Genet armed privateers, and organized expeditions, and flouted the presidential proclamation, drawing attention to the Cabinet's violation of the treaties; but that he was the French Revolution, the rallying point and the excuse for the discontented rabbles and their leaders, the patron, in a sense, of the Democratic Societies. The Federalists feared and detested the Democratic Societies—in his Farewell Address, Washington permitted himself some very violent observations concerning them—for they were the Jacobin Clubs of France in America, and the Jacobin Clubs were the brains and the nervous system of the Revolution. When the Federalists looked at Genet, they saw Marat and Robespierre, or the man they supposed Robespierre to be. When the mobs tramped through Philadelphia, yelling for France and Genet—for they did tramp, although their yelling was perhaps more against Washington and the American grandees than for France—the Federalists heard the populace of Paris roaring around the guillotine, destroying society, abolishing God. This had to be stopped in America, and it was stopped. Genet was silenced and Jay went to London; for there was the underlying motive, probably, of that otherwise profitless treaty—an ex-

pression of Anglo-Saxon solidarity against the menace of French revolutionary disintegration.

12

Genet, as well fitted as anyone by birth and upbringing to counteract these anti-French prejudices and dreads, was not helped by his temperament, his intellect, or his training. The tone of his communications with the Federal Government; his unreligious utterances which so shocked Noah Webster; his increasing absorption in the Girondist philosophy; the background of his diplomatic apprenticeship; he was not helped by any of these. For there, after all, was his great failure in America. That furnished with decorous and ingratiating manners, with a very great charm of personality, with all the social and mental qualities which might have offset the symbolism of his tricolor sash, he did not seize the occasion to reassure the Anglo-Saxons, to convince the Federalists in his person of the eventual stability, and sanity, and dignity of France, however much the *Commune* of Paris might go roaring temporarily through the streets, however much other revolutionary agents might in consequence disturb the placidity of European Courts.

But it was not in him, organized as he was, to avoid the Anglo-Saxon pitfalls. He listened to Jefferson, the "guardian angel" of liberty, and did not hear the politician and the demagogue; he watched the turmoil in the streets, and did not see the essentially local significance of it; he heard the guns and bells, all the republican shouting for France against England, and did not understand the pretext of it; that it was fundamentally a political and not a sentimental state of mind, the peg on which to hang a rising

hostility of criticism for the Federal Government, for the Hamiltonian fiscal measures, for the Washingtonian magnificence, for the aristocratic and capitalistic tendencies of Federalism. He kept talking about the people in contrast to the President, and he did not realize that only some five per cent of the population were bothering to vote at all, and that many of the loudest shouters were not qualified to vote or to legislate in any case; that Washington was the government of the United States personified, chosen by the property owners, the governing gentry, the upper classes which in the young American republic still vigorously maintained their pre-revolutionary superiority. He did not perceive that the word Revolution applied to the American separation from England was a misnomer.

And it was not in him, frankly, to rise above the letter of his instructions. To obey the spirit of them, always pushing forward along the lines prescribed in them, was his duty. But wisdom, and inspiration, and a genuine diplomacy would have found ways to compromise, to compose dispute, to give ground in one direction in order to gain more in another. But he was not a diplomat, when all is said and done, he was a very excellent clerk in chief. His father, he himself as a boy, as a young man, had been trained in a tradition of subordinate obedience, of exact observance of routine, of respect for the orders that came from above. His temperamental attempts at initiative in Russia had not been successful; only the Revolution perhaps had saved him from serious reprimand; only the diplomatic inexperience of Brissot and Lebrun could have failed to appreciate the grave peril of that temperament which it was the accident of the time to admire. Raised, suddenly, at the close of his thirtieth year, to

a post of great personal responsibility, two instincts would have come to the surface. To obey his superiors, to follow implicitly the written words furnished him, as a faithful public servant, because that was in his blood; to show himself successful in large negotiations, brilliant in active diplomacy, precisely because that was not in his blood—only the illusion of it.

And in trying to do both he foundered. There was his tragedy; to have brought the letter of his instructions within sight of success, and in so doing to have utterly defeated the spirit of them. To have performed his clerk in chief's duty down to the last guttering candle end, and in the dawn of new days to have shattered his diplomat's dream. To have won the Americans, and to have lost America.

Still, he did not entirely fail. The secretaries loved him, and he sang, often, in his woods; and the other dream was fulfilled. A dream dreamed at Versailles, with Crèvecœur, again, to guide him. An American Farm, and an American Lady. Two American Ladies.

APPENDIX

Translation of the duplicate of the letter written by Genet to Jefferson on July 4, 1797. From the original in the Genet papers, now published in full for the first time.

Fair Copy.

Letter of Edmond Charles Genet, former Minister Plenipotentiary of the French Republic to the United States, of the Academy of Sciences and the Society of Medicine of Paris, of the Royal Society of Antiquarians of London, of the Literary Societies of Upsala and Stockholm, etc.

To Mr. Thomas Jefferson,
Former Secretary of State of the United States, Vice President of the United States and President of the Philosophic Society of Philadelphia.

Cornelia's farm, Long Island, July 4, 1797.

Sir,

Tranquil and content in my peaceful retreat, occupying myself only with agricultural labors, with literary amusements, all my politics limited to enjoying from the bottom of my heart the successes of my country which I love in spite of its wrongs towards me, nothing was surely further from my thought a few days ago than to write you this letter, when various documents published by your friends during the course of the presidential elections and a speech pronounced by Mr. Giles in Congress on May 25 all came into my hands.

The incriminations which these documents contain, the plan revealed in them to throw entirely upon me certain measures which no longer suit circumstances, had at first caused me to take my pen in order to answer that Mr. Giles who had given me marks of interest and friendship towards the end of my sojourn in Philadelphia. But having read over his speech attentively, and having considered its elements and method,

and disliking roundabout ways, it is to you yourself that I have decided to address myself as to my principal accuser, as to the ostensible mouthpiece of the Federal Government in its dealings with me, as to the real author of all my ills.

Since people take pleasure in turning the knife in the wounds which I received struggling for my country, since after having defeated me, by causing me to be deserted on the breach by my own people, they insult, they outrage what is left of me forgotten in this foreign land, I have no longer any advice to take except that of despair: alone, having no support but my innocence, no weapon but the truth, I am going to advance fearlessly against the powerful band of my declared enemies and my false friends, against you, against all those who have made themselves my accusers, summon them to produce the proofs of everything which has been alleged about me and to answer what I am going to depose upon the registers of history. I owe it to my son, to the respectable family which has received me in its midst, to my fatherland which is still being deceived and to the hospitable country which covered me with the ægis of its laws at a time when mine which I was serving wished them to be violated in order to assassinate me.

I only knew you, Sir, before my nomination to the United States mission, through the useful however timid role that you had played in the American Revolution, and through the intimate associations which it was said at Petersburg that you had in Paris with the first authors of our revolution. The Russian Ministers, who then desired to form a great alliance with France and Spain in order to maintain order and peace in Europe by holding the Anglo-Prussian league in check, saw them with anxiety. They knew that you took part in the conferences in which the subversion of the old government of France was being prepared; they knew that it was through you that LaFayette and his friends were corresponding with England and America; that the imbecile Montmorin had associated you in his absurd and fatal putterings. But they ignored one fact which I owe entirely to the pleasure which you took in relating it to me in the presence of a very large number of witnesses, that it was at a dinner at your house that after long debates it had been decided to give to the French that miserable and unenforceable Constitution without shape and without nerves which was neither a monarchy nor a republic, and which could only lead to the enslavement or the destruction of France; double object towards which men accustomed to sound the secrets of Courts were convinced that the Cabinet of St. James had never ceased to strive, ever since Louis XVI had given the support of the arms of the French people to the United States.

Obliged to leave Russia in 1792 after a residence of five years, I learned, Sir, while passing through Warsaw, that during the revolution of that unhappy country, caused it was said with the same objects by the Courts of London and Berlin, you had had correspondences with Mazzei, and with the principal actors of that federal and royal aristocracy which had just reduced poor Stanislas Augustus and his devastated country to that state of hideous degradation of which I gave thanks to Heaven no longer to be the spectator when a letter from Lebrun, elected Minister of Foreign Affairs by the National Convention, called me to Paris, there to render new services to my fellow citizens relieved of a useless, dangerous and necessarily perfidious royalty.

Hardly had I arrived in Paris when I was named to the embassy in Holland, and a plan imparted to me, which seemed already somewhat matured, of a quadruple alliance and a reciprocal guarantee of territory and government between England, France, Holland and the United States. Convinced that this plan was an anachronism and that I would have to win my embassy at the point of the sword, being a Captain of Dragoons having served eighteen years in that corps, I demanded to be attached as Adjutant General to the army of Dumouriez, then covered with popularity and laurels. My demand was granted. But that traitor having tried me out, and seeing that we did not agree at all, the Council sent me to the army of the Alps to smooth out difficulties created by wicked minds which were causing Montesquiou the conqueror of Savoy to lose precious time at the gates of Geneva.

To go to the army, to conclude with Geneva an agreement such as was desired, to prevent the Swiss, their allies, from breaking their neutrality and opening up the approaches to France to the Austrians, to assure thereby the brilliant victories which have immortalized the French under the leadership of Bonaparte, and to arrange for the Republic a convenient place for its negotiations so properly entrusted to the skillful Barthelmy, was the work of fifteen days. I was hardly supposed to have arrived in Savoy, when I was seen bringing the highly unexpected result of my mission. Burning with desire to return to the army, not as a political official but as a soldier, I was making that demand when I was informed that the Council had appointed me to the Philadelphia post.

The leading members of the diplomatic committee never tired of congratulating me, of telling me that, having been the only Minister at the foreign Courts who had dared to act like a free man, to write to the King that he did not wish to play the infamous role of an impostor, to unmask the horrible treaty of Pillnitz and to protest in the midst of the Court of Catherine II in the name of the inalienable rights

of nations against the hoary usurpations of despots, I had seemed the most proper personage to reside among the fathers of our liberty, to study it in their school, to negotiate with you who were spoken of to me as a guardian angel whom those fathers had sent to us to show us the way to the promised land, while your successor Morris, to their great astonishment, was openly working to close access to it to us.

That it was for me to cement the new ties which were reciprocally to naturalize the Americans and the French, that the proposal of it had been made by you, Sir, and by the President to the Minister of the King of the French residing at Philadelphia, and that doubtless a union which the great Washington had desired during the existence of the constitutional royalty would be so all the more since France had become a Republic. That is how the leaders of the Gironde reasoned; with the exception of the judicious author of the calculation of probabilities who, seeing no affinity or attraction between our two governments ever since royalty was no longer part of them, thought that I would breathe more easily near the Grand Turk than near the grand Washington, and said that it would be better to send me to Constantinople to excite the Turks against the Russians, and to put into effect some plans that I had formulated in order to take in rear that presumptuous Power which was threatening to seat its cossacks in our assemblies.

Thinking with Condorcet that this project of union was still an anachronism, but the Constantinople mission being destined for another person, and America of itself presenting the most seductive attractions to my imagination, I hurried the drawing up of my instructions which are the faithful result of the decrees of the Convention, of the decisions of the Committees, of the proclamations of the Council and of the opinions of the most influential personages, and I started out, well determined religiously to test in the crucible of experience all the projects entrusted to me, that method being the surest for success when the measures have been well thought out and the quickest to correct errors when they have been badly organized.

Contrary winds detained me for a month at Rochefort, then drove me to the south and obliged me to put in at Charleston, where, tired of the sea, I decided to go by land to Philadelphia and to profit from this opportunity to see one of the most beautiful sections of the continent, to observe the disposition of its inhabitants, and perhaps in Virginia to have a private interview with the President as a plain traveller before appearing before him officially; a visit from which our two countries might have derived a great benefit if it had been received kindly. I undertook this instructive and agreable journey with all possible speed, after having left with the Consul accredited by the Federal Government

at Charleston the special orders of the Council for the execution of which he was held responsible (2).

The touching and unexpected proofs of the attachment of the people of the countrysides for the French people which I received appeared fairly promising, but the precipitate flight of the President from Mount Vernon and the coldness of the commercial towns seemed to me suspicious. Nevertheless I went along, exercising no official act, expressing on all occasions and notably at the table of Mr. Lee, Governor of Virginia, my respect for the Government and for its illustrious chief.

Having arrived within a few miles of Philadelphia, I learned from loyal persons who had preceded me that a great number of citizens were gathering to come and meet me with pomp in order to present an address to me, while other citizens were to present another to the President to thank him for his proclamation of neutrality which had been published a month before. I was assured that you were the author of that proclamation, and that there was reason to believe that the two addresses were also secretly patronized by the Government. I was urged to await the procession which was to start at a given signal. But this report, which bore the stamp of truth, was for me a shaft of light. I immediately saw through that tactic. I saw that all this ceremony of popularity with which I was to be surrounded, and for which you took so much credit in your letter to Morris, was devised on the one hand only to cause the allied Courts to forgive the Government the vain formality of my diplomatic reception; on the other hand to dazzle me, to put me as well as the French Republic to sleep, and gain time without doing anything.

I hastened consequently to pursue my road and to enter Philadelphia as modestly as possible. In spite of this precaution, hardly had I set foot to earth when all the bells were set swinging, the citizens assembled at the town hall and sent me a deputation to announce to me that the people of Philadelphia assembled had decided to present an address to me. From whatever point of view I might consider this proposition, I could only welcome it with a respectful sensibility. The citizens came to the number of 6000. I was as satisfied with their address as they appeared to be with my verbal and written answer in which I spoke of my trust in the wise and virtuous men in whose hands the Americans had placed the reins of their government.

The next day through your intermediation I had from the President a perfectly neutral and insignificant reception. I was aware of it, as well as of your first communications in which only the signature of Mr. Hammond was lacking in order to make them entirely English. In order to mollify me you had recourse to the soporifics of toasts and civic banquets which have often since been administered, and the citizens of

Philadelphia gave a banquet for which I was informed that you had prepared the majority of the toasts, but at which neither you nor any member of the Federal Government deigned to be present.

I expressed to you my astonishment at this singular contrast between the views of the people and the conduct of a government emanating from it; then, although you spoke to me of the President always with a profound veneration, you confessed to me that unfortunately that excellent man was controlled by the English and the aristocrats, that you were the only one in the Cabinet who still took an interest in France, but that your voice was entirely powerless; that the people, however, was for us, that your friends would have a majority in the next Congress, but that the convening of that legislative body must not be hurried because all the idle speculators and brokers of the towns would come crowding while the cultivators occupied with their labors would be slow to respond and would leave time for the former to take contrary measures.

Thus initiated by you in the foibles and secrets of your Cabinet, in the political divisions of your country, seeing mine in danger, excited by it every day to act with the greatest vigor, overwhelmed with vulgar insults in all the government sheets, obliged to avoid what is called the high society of Philadelphia which was rendering the vilest homage to the other Ministers and to the agents of the pretended Regent, I could only give myself up to you who seemed so well disposed, to the people which appeared so warm, and derive every possible advantage from my position, not as a traitor and a cheat, but with good faith and courage. I did so.

I gave the firmest tone to my official correspondence. I considered the proclamation of neutrality and all the decisions, addresses and answers that followed it only as opinions, because ratified treaties are obligatory laws which cannot be annulled except by war or by other documents invested with all the formalities which the rights of men and the Constitutions of both countries prescribe. I demanded from all the authorities of the Confederation the execution of our pacts. I discussed without concealment the intentions of France, my disagreements with the Government, my complaints and my regrets; faithful to the principle which any ambassador must adhere to in a free country, not to act in the dark, and to inscribe if he could do so his instructions upon his forehead. At the same time I instructed all my assistants (3), I laid down the rule for myself, while defending the interests and rights of our country to avoid everything which might give cause to suppose that we were seeking to inject ourselves into the internal affairs of the United States.

At first this new procedure only produced mockery from the English party. [Mr. Knox, Secretary of War, who came to see me one morning to tell me that according to the principles established by the President he would expose himself to being hanged if he loaned us so much as a pistol of the weapons that I had asked him for on behalf of our colonies, added also with laughter than in any case if I could get around him and circumvent him I was welcome. Similar jokes were being made in every circled. *Erased.*]

Soon, however, to the honor of the American people of whom history will demand proofs of its honesty, of its gratitude, of its wisdom, which it will look for in vain in its official documents, a sudden commotion seemed to have struck all virtuous men; minds were electrified; all the gazettes of the continent swarmed with articles each stronger than the others in favor of our cause, the people of its own accord constituted itself the general advocate of republican France before the Federal Government; and the Democratic Societies, composed of the patriots of '76, of the most respectable citizens, were formed as if by magic from one end of the continent to the other, and set down as a foundation for their association these powerful words, Liberty, Equality, Rights of Man, Country, France, Republic.

Then, Sir, that sentiment so common to philosophers, so fatal to those who at that moment had just vanished like meteors in France, fear, took possession of your soul. Like those Indians whom images formed by their own hands intimidate and terrify, you trembled with all the shudders of the Union and of the Cabinet of St. James, and you sought only to deprive me of the weapons which you had given me, to unpopularize me and to smother the republican fires which were being kindled on all sides.

It was at that period that as a result of a report badly heard by the Governor of Pennsylvania you worked to increase the panic terror which had already seized the President and his Cabinet, by informing him in a report of my pretended appeal to the people; probably with a view to make him feel the danger threatening [the presidency, the vice-presidency, *erased*] the great and lucrative posts of the Federal Government, those sweet objects of your desires, peace and all the speculations in land, in merchandise and in securities which it favors, finally the project of reestablishing royal federalism in France in order to weaken a nation of heroes become the models and the terror of the world—if an end were not put without delay to my political existence, since you did not forgive me for having preferred the great interests of liberty to your petty political views.

You took the pen, you Mr. Jefferson! to write that long memorial

to Morris filled with assertions without proof, as a result of which Robertspierre, listening to the voice of the dictatorship, flattering himself that he would soon be sitting in France under the protection of the law upon a seat no less elevated than that occupied in America by Washington, did not hesitate to sacrifice me with éclat in order to accustom the French to venerate a popular crown under the name of presidency.

But it was not enough in order to quiet alarms that I should lose my place; it was necessary to consummate my ruin, it was necessary that the most arbitrary orders solicited for my successor should suspend any action that I might have undertaken in your tribunals concerning that appeal to the people in which you found yourself implicated; finally it was necessary that the Democratic Societies, which an innocent, pure, sincere attachment to the cause of France and liberty solely and exclusively had alone created, should be blasphemed in the midst of the National Convention of France itself; and that was the accomplished purpose of Mr. Lear's mission to France, and of various private correspondences maintained by various members of the Federal Government with various visible and invisible citizens in Paris.

While all these masked batteries were directed against me, Sir, skillful in the art of deception you continued to see me, to receive with marked interest what I confided to you of the projects which we had ferreted out of England against the continental possessions of Spain; for, according to my instructions, I told you everything, I consulted you about everything, even about the course which I should follow in the sad affairs of our colonies; and when the President returned from Mount Vernon to Philadelphia, called back by the clamors of the English faction and of the Ministers to whom he had delegated the executive power during his absence, I informed you of the determination which I had formed to open my heart to him frankly, and to try and put an end to disputes that were daily becoming more serious. You represented to me that this procedure was contrary to usage, that all the communications of foreign Ministers with the Executive must pass through the Secretary of State, and that I would probably not be admitted. But determined to try everything which might conciliate affairs, I went that very evening to the President's.

I found him with Madame Washington and Senator Morris. After some very polite and obliging remarks on Madame Washington's part, I arose, approached the President's chair and told him that I desired to have a private interview with him. He at first made me the reply that you had foreseen; but as I insisted and assured him that it was of the highest importance for the maintenance of good harmony between our two countries, that we were perhaps both of us mistaken and that we

must come to an agreement, he passed with me into the next room. Having seated ourselves I spoke to him as a man desiring right sincerely; I assured him that I had received and not produced the movement which appeared to alarm the Government, and which I believed to be only the simultaneous effect of the honesty and integrity of the people; I swore to him, what is entirely true, that I had read with consternation in the public prints certain articles attributed to me concerning his conduct towards France, in which I had had no part; that my correspondence was indeed lively, but that if he would deign to put himself in my place and consider that by his proclamation of neutrality, and by the interpretations that had been given to it, he had annulled the most sacred treaties, taken from the French people, at the time when it had the greatest need of it in order to defend its colonies, an alliance which it looked upon as a possession dearly bought, he would agree that unless I were a traitor I could not act otherwise; but that as I had shown myself punctilious and inexorable concerning the strict execution of our old treaties, so, being thoroughly aware of the magnanimity of France, I would show myself generous if he wanted to break the treaties concluded with Louis XVI at the feet of liberty in order to draw up a new pact which would contain only principles eternally true and bases drawn from nature.

After which, never having despaired of the French people, I added with conviction that the Republic would emerge with glory from all its difficulties; that its armies, repulsed at certain points by the infamous manoeuvres of the hypocrites to whom the inexperience of the government had entrusted them, would, under the orders of truly republican generals, repair all the losses, multiply the victories, and force Europe to sue for peace on the terms which France would herself dictate, and that then she would not forget the United States. The President listened to everything and said to me simply that he did not read the gazettes and that it was of very slight importance to him whether his administration was talked about. We went out, he accompanied me as far as the stairs, took my hand and shook it.

That silent answer filled me with flattering thoughts. I ran to see you the next morning, you blushed on learning that I had had a private interview and you were expressing your astonishment at it when the door opened: it was the President himself. I arose; I looked from one to the other of you to see if I might read in your eyes an invitation to remain for which I would willingly have given a part of my life; but a very imperative sign from you forced me to retire. I saw you again afterwards. I used every method to find out if the President had spoken to you of my efforts, but you were impenetrable.

A short time afterwards the fleet of the Republic, proscribed and

flying from the calamities of Santo Domingo, came of its own accord into the ports of the United States to put itself under my direction. I formed the plan of making it serve the cause of liberty in the new world. I imparted it to you. I chose New York, the finest and best supplied port in the Union, as its rallying and organizing point. I made use of this occasion to rid myself of all the privateers by attaching them as advice boats and scouts to the fleet. I took leave of you, of the President who received me very politely, drank with me and with several officers whom I presented to him, and I went to New York where the Republicans of that town gave me an honorable welcome and a most useful one in the circumstances in which I found myself, placed face to face with a fleet in mutiny.

A few minutes after entering my house I learned that the emissaries of the Federal Government had neglected nothing in order to frustrate that reception by announcing that I had insulted the President and that I had threatened to appeal to the people from his decisions. That was the first news that I had of that fable certified to by Messrs. Jay and King. I laughed at it and thought that it deserved no other answer. Some real friends who had not pushed themselves forward like so many others, and whose attachment has increased with my reverses, thought differently. I thought about it further; I perceived that this imposture could indeed have deep roots. I recalled a conversation held with me by Mr. Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury, in which, after having told me that the United States would be committing a hostile act if they were to pay the total of their debt to France, he tried to prove to me that the *casus foederis* did not exist between her and the United States and that the latter could give her no help because she had acted in a hostile way against Great Britain, by her irruption into the Low Countries, by her designs against Holland, her correspondences with her popular societies, the dealings of Mr. Chauvelin and his mentor with the party in opposition, and the appeal to the people with which the Cabinet of H.B.M. had been threatened in the National Convention.

I compared this revelation, which did not sin at all on the side of duplicity, with what was taking place in my case; and suspecting that perhaps pretexts were being sought, either to reinforce the arguments of Mr. Pitt by supporting them with the opinion and testimony of the United States, or to conceal the ingratitude of the Federal Government, set aside our alliance and cement one with England, I wrote directly to the President to ask him if it was true that I had threatened to appeal from his decisions to the people. You replied to me in his name in an evasive manner.

Unable to obtain satisfaction through that channel, I addressed my-

self to the Attorney General of the United States, to the famous Randolph; he gave me a dilatory reply and kept me waiting until the arrival of my successor who caused me, according to his instructions, to be enjoined by Citizen Le Blanc, invested with the same powers as himself and nominal secretary of his legation, to go no further with this affair of which I was about to occupy myself in person in the Superior Court of Pennsylvania.

Citizen Fauchet, rendered powerless by the character given to his mission by the concealed royalists who were assisting with their talents the stupid ambition, the ferocious policy of Robertspierre in order, after destroying that blackguard, to reestablish despotism upon the soiled and disgusting ruins of liberty; Citizen Fauchet, I say, was obliged himself to cut his own wings, to throw himself into the arms of the enemies of his country, to disavow everything that I had done, and, before having seen me, to demand my arrest so that I might be executed aboard Vaustable's convoy or at Brest; Robertspierre, acting upon your denunciations alone, having given orders not to allow me to arrive alive in Paris; for he had neither read my reports, nor awaited my defense, as Citizen Adet has since officially confirmed it.

This sanguinary request was rejected by Washington who declared that he had asked for my recall and not for my punishment; but Randolph, your friend, the man of precious confessions, added confidentially that I still had many friends, that it would be necessary to wait, but that if France insisted one would see if the powers of the President, which in this respect were questionable, could not offer some expedient, nevertheless, in order to do what France wished.

All these infamies have fully justified in the tribunal of my conscience my decision, not having been recalled (4), to remain in America after having turned in my accounts and handed over my papers to my successors in an honorable manner; and, though with very little fortune, to bury myself in retreat and silence; to meditate upon the great revolutions of the world; gather materials for history; penetrate the fascinating secrets of nature; and especially isolate myself from the detestable intrigues of Courts and the discouraging cabals of nations.

Would to God, Sir, that rendering more justice to your talents you also had consecrated the rest of your life to the cult of the sciences after having labored to establish the independence of the United States. Would to God that all the other envoys of the Federal Government had done as much. France would perhaps have passed without suspension of movement from one energetic government to another energetic government; the blood of the Bourbons, banished like that of the Tarquins, would not have flown upon the scaffolds; the French people,

powerful and feared, would have held Europe in check and found allies; millions of men would still be alive for agriculture and for the arts; Poland would not be destroyed; and the United States, conducting themselves strictly as an association of industrious merchants, of peaceful farmers who prefer the horn of plenty to the trumpet of fame, would not have drawn upon themselves the resentment of all the parties that have succeeded each other in France and which have all been equally deceived; of Spain, whom your dreams about Kentucky, the consequences given under your auspices to the project of emancipating South America and the last retrocession made to England of a favor granted to the United States must have alarmed and must still peculiarly alarm, in spite of all the mammoth bones that you are now sending to her like relics to calm her; of the Courts of the North, who enjoy neither your commentaries on Vattel, nor the refusal sent according to them to the Danish Court to cooperate in the maintenance of the principles of armed neutrality, that solid foundation of the freedom of the seas laid at Petersburg through the intervention of France and Spain; finally of that man whose very name today presents the collective idea of all the stupidities and of all the blunders, of Pitt, who, dissatisfied as one always is with indecisions and half measures, only appears to have drawn closer to the United States in order to vomit upon them his last poison, punish them for having been the first to hoist the standard of the liberty that crushes him, to set them on fire, to tear them apart, and to make their blindness serve to destroy the treaties which guarantee their independence.

Surely if in circumstances so critical one mortal has need to be endowed with all the virtues, all the talents, to be surrounded with the trust, the firmness of his fellow citizens, to be aided by the unity of action and prudence of his subordinates, it is the present President who has given a positive proof of courage in daring to take the helm of state when on one side vacuity and obstinacy, ambition and weakness, on the other anglomania and temerity, baseness and corruption have caused him to lose his way and his course; when so many storms thunder above him, so many factions disturb his crew, and so many [*illegible*] and exotic insects eat up his manoeuvres to make him founder and necessitate the promotion of a pilot already experienced in the art of European intrigues which have been, which are and which will be so fatal to the [*illegible*].

I will not go further into this new mystery; I will not bring to bear upon the shadows which still cover it the light which the past would provide; but as everything that Mr. Adams may have written ten years ago after Montesquiou and de Lolme on monarchies and nobles would be much less dangerous in his communications with our brave and con-

stant republicans, become the models and the terror of the world, than a semi republicanism, an emasculated federalism, a timid philosophy, an easy morality, a tottering and suspected policy, I make vows that this present head of the American union may have the most complete success in his negotiations with France; that neither he nor the *Directoire* may fall into any of the traps set for them; that my fate may indicate to my compatriots the quicksand in which I was lost for them and through them; that the sinister situation of England may show the Americans what they may expect from that hitherto Power; that frankness, generosity and reason may preside consequently on both sides over the arrangements which will take place; and that our two governments may recognize promptly that they can do each other a great deal of good, but that nature has fortunately made it impossible for them to do each other much harm.

It appears from this letter, Sir, that faithful or unfaithful agents of the preceding Federal Administration have injected themselves into the internal affairs of France; that after having contributed their ministration to the overthrow of the monarchy, they have opposed themselves as much as they could to the establishment of an energetic popular government; that there is reason to believe that new machinations are still being plotted to make us effeminate or to divide us. Whereas I, who have been represented as an anarchist, a partisan, a disorganizer, I am ready to prove juridically to all men, and if I do not obtain it to the last tribunal before which we will all be judged, that during my mission in the United States, limiting myself to defending the rights and interests of my country, I did not inject myself in any way into the internal affairs of this one; that my first dealings with the people were the work itself of the agents of the Government, either working for themselves or for it; that I observed towards President Washington all the regard due to his character and to his post; that the fable of my appeal to the people is an insidious artifice and a perfidious lie; finally that France and America, enlightened, disabused, ought both of them to make me a reparation as brilliant as the outrages which I endured with my unfortunate cooperators were bloody, if governments possessed sufficient virtue or sufficient leisure to seek out unhappy zeal, oppressed innocence, persecuted patriotism.

Salut.
GENET.

Notes.

(1) Extract of the speech pronounced by Mr. Giles in the House of Representatives on May 25, 1797. Published in the New York *Journal* printed by Greenleaf on June 14 in the same year.

"France informed of the hostile intentions of England by various signs, by the dismissal of her Minister and by the measures which she was adopting to intercept her commerce in all parts of the world, declared war on that Power on February 1, 1793. This step put the United States in a delicate and disagreeable situation; they then had intimate and extended commercial relations with France and with England and a treaty of *alliance* with France which they did *not* desire to *violate*. In this state of affairs the President issued his proclamation of neutrality on April 22, in which he recommended to the citizens to conduct themselves in conformity with that proclamation towards the belligerent Powers.

"On April 8 a French Minister, Mr. Genet, arrived in the United States. His behaviour made our situation more delicate; he began to establish inexcusable relations with individuals, citizens of the United States, which were followed by a conduct so rude towards the executive branch of our Government that his recall was demanded on August 16, 1793.

"His appeal from the Government to the people, as it is called, produced no effect upon the attachment of the people to the Government, but on the contrary had the opposite effect of producing greater union. Genet's conduct was everywhere disapproved except by some turbulent citizens (among whom was Mr. Giles) who are to be found in every country, but fortunately in smaller numbers in this one than in any other. Their proportion relative to the mass of citizens is very small.

"The precept which this circumstance should have inculcated in the Government ought to have been confidence in the people and the certainty of its support on all occasions. But for the first time distrust seems to have taken hold of the heart of the Executive, and from a vigilant and perhaps praiseworthy zeal to suppress these first efforts of a foreign Minister among the people, his alarms went so far that it has not been possible since to calm the spasms of which he received the impression at that time.

"The enthusiasm of the people in favor of the French cause was at its highest point before the arrival of Genet, but when it perceived that this Minister was injecting himself improperly in this manner into the affairs of its Government, assemblages of citizens were formed from one end of the continent to the other which declared as with one single voice the intention of sustaining our Government against all the attacks which might be made upon its authority. If execration, disdain and disillusion could offset his offense, he was overwhelmed with them by the people that he desired to attach to his country." The conclusion of this orator's speech is to conciliate everything, to have the House of Rep-

resentatives give instructions to the Executive to put France . . . on the same footing with the other Powers and with England . . . ! !

(2) It was according to the orders of the Council that Citizen Mangourit equipped two little vessels at Charleston which instead of coming clumsily to Philadelphia with the *Embuscade* to bring in their prizes, eat up their money and increase my troubles, were to have established an active cruise with that frigate off the coasts of the United States, in order to blockade all English commerce in their ports. A measure which would have been of the greatest utility if, instead of hastening fruitlessly to deliver its neutrality to Great Britain, the Federal Government, after having agreed with me, had put an embargo on the English vessels and had threatened to have Congress pass non importation and confiscation acts if the King of England did not recognize the neutrality of the American flag and that of the French colonies guaranteed by the United States.

(3) Extract of the general instructions given to Consuls and other agents of the French Republic in the United States by Citizen Genet on June 7, 1793.

Neglect nothing in order to present to the Americans all the facts relating to our immortal revolution in their true light; emphasize the greatness and justice of our cause, but carefully avoid all public or private discussion which might cause it to be supposed that we are seeking to inject ourselves into the internal affairs of the Government of the United States. It is here that our revolutionary policy must stop; it is here that we must show that if we are working to overthrow the thrones of all the tyrants, we know how to respect religiously the laws of a free people.

(4) Letter of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to Citizen Genet, Paris, 28 Brumaire, Second year of the French Republic.

As the result of very grave complaints which have been laid before the provisional Executive Council concerning the way in which you have fulfilled the functions entrusted to you, the Executive Council has named Citizen Fauchet to replace you in your capacity of Minister Plenipotentiary in the United States. You will hand over to him without delay all the papers concerning the legation of the Republic at Philadelphia, and especially the documents relating to the accounts with which you have been charged, in the same manner as your predecessor.

Signed, DEFORGUES.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

THE GENET PAPERS

Edmé Jacques Genet, 1726–1781

Private papers in the possession of his great-granddaughter.

Private papers in the possession of the Library of Congress.

Edmond Charles Genet, 1763–1834

Private papers in the possession of his granddaughter.

Private papers in the possession of the Library of Congress.

HISTORIES AND BIOGRAPHIES

J. Q. Adams

Memoirs.

A. Aulard

Histoire politique de la Révolution Française.

J. S. Bassett

The Federalist System.

Caron de Beaumarchais

B. E. Hazard, Beaumarchais and the American Revolution.

E. S. Kite, Beaumarchais and the War of American Independence.

L. de Loménie, *Beaumarchais et son temps.*

Jules Marsan, *Beaumarchais et les Affaires d'Amérique.*

C. J. Stillé, Beaumarchais and the Lost Million.

Hilaire Belloc

Miniatures of French History.

S. F. Bemis, ed.

The American Secretaries of State and their Diplomacy. Volume II.

Charles Biddle

Autobiography.

Louis Blanc
Histoire de la Révolution.

J. P. Brissot
Mémoires.

General Burgoyne
F. J. Huddleston, Gentleman Johnny Burgoyne. Misadventures of an English General in the Revolution.

Aaron Burr
W. F. McCaleb, The Aaron Burr Conspiracy.
Meade Minnigerode, with S. H. Wandell, Aaron Burr.

Mann Butler
History of Kentucky.

J. L. Henriette Campan
Journal Anecdotique.

Edward Channing
A History of the United States.

George Rogers Clark
Temple Bodley, George Rogers Clark, his Life and Public Services.

E. S. Corwin
French Policy and the American Alliance of 1778.

Alexander James Dallas
G. M. Dallas, Life and Writings of Alexander James Dallas.

Danton
Hilaire Belloc, Danton.
Louis Madelin, Danton.

Victor Duruy
Histoire de France.

Bryan Edwards
An historical survey of the French colony in the Island of St. Domingo, etc., 1797.

Max Farrand
The Fathers of the Constitution.

Bernard Faÿ
Ramon Guthrie, transl., The Revolutionary Spirit in France and America.

Benjamin Franklin
Phillips Russell, Benjamin Franklin, the First Civilized American.

Charles Gayarré
History of Louisiana.

Edmond Charles Genet
Paul Courteault, *Une famile française.* (Genet family.)
L. Didier, *Le Citoyen Genet.* In *Revue des Questions Historiques,* 1912, 1913.
G. C. Genet, Washington, Jefferson and Citizen Genet.
Edouard Harlé, *Livre de famille.* (Genet family.)
Meade Minnigerode, Lives and Times.
F. J. Turner, The origin of Genet's projected attack on Louisiana and the Floridas. American Historical Review, Volume III.

George Gibbs
Administrations of Washington and John Adams.

Stephen Girard
J. B. McMaster, The Life and Times of Stephen Girard.

J. P. Gordy
A History of Political Parties in the United States.

Alexander Graydon
Memoirs of his own time with reminiscences of the men and events of the Revolution.

T. M. Green
The Spanish Conspiracy.

Philip Guedalla
Fathers of the Revolution.
Masters and Men.

Alexander Hamilton
A. M. Hamilton, The Intimate Life of Alexander Hamilton.
J. C. Hamilton, Life of Alexander Hamilton.
J. C. Hamilton, History of the Republic of the United States, as traced in the writings of Alexander Hamilton.

C. D. Hazen
Contemporary American Opinion of the French Revolution.

Richard Hildreth
History of the United States.

Andrew Jackson
J. S. Bassett, The Life of Andrew Jackson.
James Parton, The Life of Andrew Jackson.

John Jay

William Jay, The Life of John Jay.
George Pellew, John Jay.

Thomas Jefferson

C. J. Bowers, Jefferson and Hamilton.
J. T. Morse, Thomas Jefferson.
James Parton, Life of Thomas Jefferson.
H. S. Randall, The Life of Thomas Jefferson.
T. E. Watson, The Life and Times of Thomas Jefferson.

John Paul Jones

Phillips Russell, Life of John Paul Jones.

P. A. Kropotkin

N. F. Dryhurst, transl., The Great French Revolution.

Ernest Lavisse

La Révolution Française.

G. Lenotre

La Captivité et la Mort de Marie Antoinette.
La Fille de Louis XVI.
Le Dauphin, Louis XVII.
Le Drame de Varennes.
Les Massacres de Septembre.
Vielles Maisons, Vieux Papiers.

George Logan

D. N. Logan, Memoir of Dr. George Logan of Stenton, etc.

William Maclay

Journal.

Louis Madelin

La Révolution.

Dolly Madison

M. W. Goodwin, Dolly Madison.

Marie Antoinette

Hilaire Belloc, Marie Antoinette.

Humphrey Marshall

History of Kentucky.

John Marshall

A. J. Beveridge, The Life of John Marshall.

F. X. Martin
History of Louisiana.

J. B. McMaster
History of the People of the United States from the Revolution to the Civil War.

Meade Minnigerode
Presidential Years, 1787–1860.
Some American Ladies.

General Miranda
J. Biggs, The History of Don Francisco de Miranda's attempt to effect a revolution in South America, 1809.

J. W. Monette
Mississippi Valley, History of the Discovery, etc.

Moreau de Saint Méry
Journal.

Napoleon
Emil Ludwig, E. and C. Paul, transl., Napoleon.

Harrison Gray Otis
S. E. Morrison, Life and Letters of Harrison Gray Otis.

Thomas Paine
M. D. Conway, The Writings of Thomas Paine.
F. J. Gould, Thomas Paine.

J. B. Perkins
France in the American Revolution.

Alfred Rambaud
L. B. Lang, transl., History of Russia.

Edmund Randolph
M. D. Conway, Omitted Chapters of History disclosed in the Life and Papers of Edmund Randolph.

John Randolph
W. C. Bruce, John Randolph of Roanoke.

J. M. Robertson
Louisiana under the rule of Spain, etc.

Robespierre
Hilaire Belloc, Robespierre.
G. Lenotre, Mrs. Rodolph Stawell, transl., Robespierre's Rise and Fall.

Theodore Roosevelt
The Winning of the West.

James Schouler
History of the United States under the Constitution.

L. P. de Ségur
Mémoires.

Lord Shelburne
E. G. P. Fitzmaurice, Life of William, Earl of Shelburne.

C. L. Skinner
Pioneers of the old Southwest.

Edward Stanwood
A History of the Presidency.

T. L. Stoddard
The French Revolution in San Domingo.

Casimir Stryienski
Le Dix-Huitième Siècle.

N. B. Sylvester
History of Rensselaer County, N. Y.

C. H. Van Tyne
The American Revolution.
The Loyalists in the American Revolution.

George Washington
H. J. Ford, Washington and his Colleagues.
P. L. Ford, The true George Washington.
W. C. Ford, George Washington.
Rupert Hughes, George Washington, The Human Being and the Hero.
John Marshall, Life of George Washington.
A. H. Wharton, Martha Washington.
W. E. Woodward, George Washington, The Image and the Man.

Beckles Willson
America's Ambassadors to France, 1777–1927.

Justin Winsor
Narrative and Critical History of America.
The Western Movement.

H. A. Wise
Seven Decades of the Union.

CORRESPONDENCE AND ARCHIVES

John Adams

Life and Works of John Adams, C. F. Adams, ed.

Letters of Mrs. John Adams, C. F. Adams, ed.

American State Papers

Foreign Relations.

Indian Affairs.

Military Affairs.

Miscellaneous.

Caron de Beaumarchais

Beaumarchais the Merchant; letters of Théveneau de Francy, 1777–1780. John Bigelow, ed.

Phineas Bond

Letters of Phineas Bond, British Consul at Philadelphia, to the Foreign Office of Great Britain, 1790–1794. American Historical Association, Report, 1897.

Douglas Brymner, archivist

Reports on Canadian Archives, 1891, 1894.

A. M. P. de Circourt

Histoire de l'action commune de la France et de l'Amérique.

George Rogers Clark

Correspondence of George Rogers Clark and Genet, 1793–1794. H. E. Bourne, ed. American Historical Association, Report, 1896, Volume I.

George Clinton

Papers in the possession of the New York Historical Society.

Henri Doniol

Histoire de la participation de la France à l'établissement des Etats Unis d'Amérique. Correspondence Diplomatique et Documents.

J. B. G. de R. de Flassan

Histoire Générale et raisonnée de la diplomatie Française . . . depuis la fondation de la monarchie jusqu'à la fin du règne de Louis XVI.

Edmond Charles Genet

The Correspondence between Citizen Genet . . . and the officers of the Federal Government . . . 1793. B. F. Bache, publ.

Alexander Hamilton

Works. Constitutional Edition.

Stephen Higginson

Letters of Stephen Higginson, 1783–1804. J. F. Jameson, ed. American Historical Association, Report, 1896, Volume I.

John Jay

Correspondence and Public Papers. H. P. Johnston, ed.

The Peace Negotiations of 1782–3, as illustrated by the secret correspondence of France and England. John Jay, ed. American Historical Association, May 23, 1887.

Thomas Jefferson

Anas.

Works, P. L. Ford, ed.

Correspondence, W. C. Ford, ed.

John Paul Jones

John Paul Jones in Russia. F. A. Golder, ed.

Rufus King

Life and Correspondence of Rufus King, C. R. King, ed.

William Lee

Letters. W. C. Ford, ed.

Thomas Lloyd

The trials of W. S. Smith and S. G. Ogden.

James Madison

Writings. Gaillard Hunt, ed.

M. A. B. de Mangourit

The Mangourit correspondence in respect to Genet's projected attack upon the Floridas, 1793–4. F. J. Turner, ed. American Historical Association, Report, 1897.

André Michaux

Journal. American Philosophical Society, Proceedings, 1889.

General Miranda

Correspondence of General Miranda and Alexander Hamilton, 1798. Edinburgh Review, 1808–9.

James Monroe

Writings. S. W. Hamilton, ed.

Gouverneur Morris

Correspondence. J. Sparks, ed.

The Diary and Letters of Gouverneur Morris. A. C. Morris, ed.

Old Family Letters
Copied from the originals for Alexander Biddle.

J. D. Richardson
Messages and Papers of the Presidents.

David Robertson
Trials of Aaron Burr.

Freeman Snow
Treaties and Topics in American Diplomacy.

B. F. Stevens
Facsimiles of Manuscripts in European archives relating to America, 1773–1783.

Treaties, Conventions, International Acts, Protocols and Agreements between the United States and other Powers.

F. J. Turner, ed.
Correspondence of the French Ministers to the United States, 1791–1797. American Historical Association, Report, 1903, Volume II.
Carondelet on the defense of Louisiana, 1794. American Historical Review, Volume II.
Documents on the Relations of France to Louisiana, 1792–1795. American Historical Review, Volume III.

George Washington
Works. W. C. Ford, ed.

Noah Webster
E. E. F. Ford, ed., Notes on the Life of Noah Webster.

Francis Wharton, ed.
The Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States.

James Wilkinson
W. R. Shepherd, Wilkinson and the beginnings of the Spanish Conspiracy. American Historical Review, Volume IX.

GENERAL

J. P. Brissot de Warville
Nouveau Voyage dans les Etats Unis.

Henry Budd
Citizen Genet's visit to Philadelphia.

H. St. J. de Crévecœur

Lettres d'un cultivateur Américain, 1784.

Henri Doniol

Le Ministère des Affaires Etrangères de France sous le Comte de Vergennes. Revue d' Histoire Diplomatique, Volume VII, 1893.

John Drayton

Letters written during a tour through the Northern and Eastern States of America, 1794.

F. S. Ellet

The Court Circles of the Republic.

The Queens of American Society.

Edmond Charles Genet

Communications on public health and public improvements, 1818.

Address on the means of opening new sources of wealth for the northern States, 1821.

Memorial on the upward forces of fluids and their applicability to several arts, 1825.

Communications on the next election . . . by a citizen of New York.

Ed., Secret proceedings and debates of the Convention assembled at Philadelphia in the year 1787 for the purpose of forming the Constitution of the United States of America.

R. W. Griswold

The Republican Court.

G. E. King

New Orleans, the Place and the People.

V. L. Parrington

The Colonial Mind, 1620–1800.

The Romantic Revolution in America, 1800–1860.

(Mrs.) St. Julien Ravenel

Charleston, the Place and the People.

De la Rochefoucauld Liancourt

Voyage dans les Etats Unis d'Amérique, 1799.

T. E. Smith

The City of New York in the year of Washington's Inauguration.

G. L. Strachey

Landmarks in French Literature.

Isaac Weld
Travels through the States of North America.

A. H. Wharton
Salons Colonial and Republican.
Social Life in the early Republic.

PAMPHLETS, GAZETTES, ETC.

Bache's *General Advertiser and Aurora,* 1793–1796.

Bache, publ., Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation between His Britannick Majesty and the United States of America . . . 1795.

William Cobbett
A Bone to gnaw for the Democrats, 1795.
The Diplomatic Blunderbuss, 1796.

Fenno's *United States Gazette,* 1792–1796.

Freneau's *National Gazette,* 1793.

New York *Journal,* 1788–1796.

Only pamphlets and gazettes consulted have been listed. No attempt has been made to furnish a pamphlet bibliography of the period.

INDEX

Adams, John, as American Commissioner in France, 34, 35, 38, 66, 67 ff, 247; French conception of him, 152; records Jefferson's utterances on French Revolution, 168; protects his house in Philadelphia with arms, 184; reported prophecy as to Genet's recall, 347; President, 386; not an enemy of Genet, 388, 393
Adams, John Quincy, 367
Adams, Samuel, 3, 347
Adet, French Minister to America, 178, 360, 362
Alberoni, Cardinal, 4
America, *see* United States
American Philosophical Society, 253
Angevilliers, Countess d', 18, 66
Annays, Abbé des, 17
Artois, Count d', 50, 67, 81, 82, 89, 109, 115, 400
Asgill, Major, 80
Athos, Mount, Greek MSS. in monasteries of, 15–18

Bache, Benjamin F., 221, 301, 343
Barlow, Joel, 247, 248
Barry, Madame du, 34
Bastille, storming of, 89
Beaumarchais, Caron de, 11, 27, 28, 30, 33, 34, 38, 39, 40, 41, 46, 67
Beaupoil, 247, 248
Belloc, Hilaire, 364
Biddle, Charles, 203, 214, 216, 231, 237
Billaud-Varenne, 137–8, 246, 366
Bingham, William, 216
Bolton, Matthew, 78
Bombelles, Marquis de, 109, 114
Bompard, Captain of French frigate *Embuscade*, 236, 237, 301, 306, 346
Bonnet, in charge of Genet's family affairs in France during his absence in America, 156, 157, 383
Boston, pro-French utterances from, 220–1; dispute over French prizes at, 238 ff.
Boston, British frigate, engagement with the *Embuscade*, 237
Bournonville, one of Genet's secretaries, 156, 214, 233, 262, 264, 341, 342, 369, 373, 375, 376, 378, 383
Bowers's *Jefferson and Hamilton*, 164, 170, 233
Breteuil, 63, 64, 73, 75, 79
Brissot, 36, 124, 127, 128, 129, 131, 133, 141, 246, 290, 411
Broglie, chief of French royal secret service, 4, 11
Broglie, Duke de, 11
Bruneau, Mathurin, pretender to French throne, 137
Bureau of Interpreters, French, 4
Burgoyne, surrender of, 29, 179
Burr, Aaron, 212, 251, 253, 256, 258, 320

Calonne, French Treasury Minister, 79, 81, 109
Cambis, Admiral, in Santo Domingan revolution of 1793, 271, 294, 300, 301, 302, 303
Campan, *see* Genet, Jeanne Louise Henriette
Canada, loss of, by France, 3, 22, 27; French plan for absorption of, by United States, 142, 143, 245 ff., 261, 344
Cap Français, Santo Domingo, destroyed in revolution of 1793, 271, 289, 294–6
Carondelet, Spanish Governor of Louisiana, 252, 345
Cassan, French Consul at Philadelphia, 354–5; 369, 375, 379, 381, 382–3, 392
Castries, 74, 76
Catherine II of Russia, 23, 85–6, 87, 88, 89, 92, 93, 94, 100 ff., 109, 110, 112, 113, 116, 117

Charleston, S. C., Genet's reception at, on landing in United States, 185 ff.; Genet arms privateers at, 190; pro-French utterances from, 221
Chartres, Duchess de, 32, 49
Chaumette, 165
Choiseul, French Minister of Foreign Affairs, 3, 4, 6, 21, 55
Clark, George Rogers, connection with Genet's schemes in the Southwest, 248, 249, 252, 253, 258–61, 345, 358
Clarke, Elijah, 257
Clinton, Cornelia Tappen, 301, 319, 326, 346, 363–4, 372–3, 377; marriage to Genet, 378; death of, 400
Clinton, De Witt, 393
Clinton, George, Governor of New York, 319, 372, 376, 377, 378
Commune of Paris, the, 120, 125 131, 135, 246
Concorde, French frigate, 236, 238
Condorcet, 128, 130, 133
Cossin's News Sheet, 23
Couthon, 246
Crèvecœur, "Letters of an American Farmer," by, 66, 372; 127, 128

Dallas, Alexander, 203, 220, 262; Genet's alleged threat to, to appeal to the people, 265, 319 ff.; his public statement denying the threat, 329–31
Danton, 120, 125, 131–2, 134, 365
Deane, Silas, 22, 24, 31, 33, 38, 39, 40, 41
Deforgues, French Minister of Foreign Affairs, 248; letter of July 30, 1793, to Genet, 276 ff.; recalls Genet, 286–7
De Kalb, Baron, French agent in America, 4
Democratic Societies, the, 219 ff., 231, 409
De Pauw, Kentucky merchant, 252, 259
Diamond necklace, affair of the, 79
Drayton, Stephen, 257, 357
Dumouriez, 124, 128, 130, 223, 247
Duplaine, French Consul at Boston, 238 ff.

East India Company, the British, 76–7
Embargo of 1794, 229
Embuscade, French frigate, 158, 159, 160, 185, 187, 190, 196, 216, 236–7, 299, 301
England, hereditary enemy of France, 3; policy of France against, 27 ff.; American peace negotiations in Paris, 1782–3, 67 ff.; Genet's reports of political and other affairs in, in 1783, 73 ff.; Genet's protests against violations of neutrality by, 229–30
Eon, Chevalier d', 10–12, 34
Estaing, Admiral d', 38
Esterhazy, 109, 114, 115

Faneuil Hall, 169
Fauchet, French minister to America succeeding Genet, 287, 288, 357–8, 361 ff., 372, 373, 381
Federal Gazette, the, 224
Federalists, aristocratic and British heritage of, 164
Fersen, Axel de, 51, 52, 79, 82, 96, 99, 136, 165
Florida, French schemes against, 245 ff., 256–7, 356 ff.
Fox, Charles James, 74, 75
France, interest of, in British-American affairs, 3–4, 22; popular espousal of American cause in, 26; policy of, regarding England and the American alliance of 1778, 27 ff.; pro-American propaganda and diplomatic intrigues in, 35 ff.; the American peace negotiations in 1782–3, 67 ff.; peace with England, 73 ff.; approach of the Revolution, 81–2; events of 1789 in Paris, 89 ff.; the Constitutions of 1790 and 1791, 94–5; at war with Austria and Prussia, 117; the Republic declared, 120; trial and execution of Louis XVI, 132–4; at war with England, 159; fall of the Girondists and the retinue of the Terror in power in Paris, 245–6, 276; war with United States of 1799–1800, 386–7
Franklin, Benjamin, as American commissioner in France, 22, 24, 26, 34, 36, 37, 38, 41, 67 ff., 91, 153, 407
Frederick the Great, 62, 63
French fleet in New York harbor, mutiny in, 300
Freneau's *National Gazette*, 167, 172, 181, 221

Galbaud, General, in Santo Domingan revolution of 1793, 271, 289, 292 ff.
Gallatin, Albert, 342
Gateschi, Abbé, 8
Genet, Adelaide Henriette (sister of Edmond Charles), 7, 20, 48, 49, 53, 91, 121, 122, 383
Genet, Anne Glaphire Sophie (sister of Edmond Charles), 7, 20
Genet, Cornelia Tappen Clinton, 379
Genet, Edmé Jacques (father of Edmond Charles Genet), clerk in chief of French Bureau of Interpreters, 4 ff., 18, 22 ff., 29, 31, 33 ff., 48, 52 ff.; death of, 64

Genet, Edmond Charles, birth and education and early literary accomplishments of, 7 ff.; at court in 1777, 20; in the Bureau of Interpreters, 21 ff.; work at Brest and Nantes, 51 ff.; visit to Germany, 56 ff.; succeeds his father as clerk in chief of the Bureau of Interpreters, 65–6; the American peace negotiations in Paris, 1782–3, 67 ff.; secretary to French embassy at London, and his reports on political and other affairs there, 73 ff.; returns to France, 79; on Marie Antoinette's character, 80–1; appointed chargé d'affaires at St. Petersburg, 82; journey to and service in Russia, 84 ff.; hotheadedness and indiscretion of, 90, 108–9; his attitude toward the French Constitution of 1790, 95 ff.; difficult situation in Russia after the flight to Varennes, 100 ff.; reports and comments of, from Russia in 1791 and 1792, 109 ff.; dismissed by Catherine II and returns to France, 117–20; standing in Paris on his return, 123–5; proposes sending Louis XVI to America, 126 ff.; genesis of his mission to America, 128–31; appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to the United States, 129, 140; leaves Paris, 135, 158; his instructions, 141 ff.; commercial aspects of his mission, 147 ff.; fatal influence of misconceptions of leading personages in America on his attitude, 150 ff., 165; preparations for voyage to America, 155 ff.; his departure, 160; delicate situation in America created by his mission, and question as to his reception by the government and observance of the treaties, 173 ff.; his claims and contentions regarding French privateers and prizes in American ports, 174–5, 208, 223–4, 229 ff., 234 ff., 261 ff.; decides to land at Charleston, and his reception there, 185 ff.; advice of Izard to, and effect of his disregard of it, 188–9; arms privateers at Charleston, 190; journey to Philadelphia, 191 ff.; reception at Philadelphia, 197, 203 ff., 214–16; his opinions on the different classes in America and prejudice against Washington and his Federalist advisers on his arrival in Philadelphia, 201–3; his intentions and attitude as to Franco-American treaties, 206–8, 224–5; his official reception by Washington, and his description of him, 208–11; his misplaced trust in and fatal association with Jefferson, 211–14, 234; obstacles encountered by, 222 ff.; belief, fostered by Jefferson, that Congress will be in his favor, 223, 263, 267, 278, 279, 349; efforts to collect some part of American national debt to France before it was due, 225–7; controversy with Jefferson over interpretation of the treaties, 227 ff., 262–3; fundamental correctness of his views and actions, 233–4; his opinion on the whole question of privateers, 242–3; projects of, to excite the Canadians and to prepare expeditions against Florida and Louisiana, 245 ff.; his alleged, but disproved, threat to appeal from the President to the people, 265 ff., 301, 308, 317 ff.; private interview with Washington, 269–71; his report of July 31, 1793, on his mission, to French Foreign Ministry, 272 ff.; request for his recall decided on by federal government, 281 ff.; recall of and decree of death against, 286–8; the Santo Domingan revolution of 1793 and its effect on his plans, 271, 296 ff.; corespondence regarding attitude of American government after the uprising, 308 ff.; in New York, 317 ff.; letter to Washington about his alleged threat to appeal to the people, 322–3; intended prosecution of Jay and King for libel, 329, 333 ff., 363; accumulating disasters of, 337; informed by Jefferson of the request for his recall and his resulting action, 338 ff.; publishes his instructions, 341–3; continues his projects against Canada and Louisiana, 344 ff., 356 ff.; Congress fails to support him, 349–50; near-success of his Spanish projects, 358, 360; superseded by Fauchet 361; Fauchet has orders to arrest and supposedly to execute him, but federal government declines to give him up, 361–3; his financial claims against French government never settled, 368–9, 402; question of his return to France and final decision to remain in America, 369 ff., 380–2, 384, 392–4; gives his reasons to Fauchet, 373–5; marriage to Cornelia Clinton, 378; difficult position during French-American troubles of 1799–1800, 385 ff.; letter of vindication to the *Directoire*, 389 ff.; becomes an American citizen, 393–4; his letter of July 4, 1797, to Jefferson, 394 ff. (printed in full, 413 ff.); drops out of the national scene and subsequent life in re-

Genet, Edmond Charles—*Continued*
tirement, 397 ff.; second marriage, 400; death of, 403; a summary of his conduct of his mission and the effect upon it of his temperament and training, of American public personages and party politics and the French lack of understanding of them, 404 ff.
Genet, Edmond Charles Clinton, 379
Genet, George Clinton, 400–1
Genet, Jean (grandfather of Edmond Charles Genet), 4, 5, 6
Genet, Jeanne Louise Henriette (Madame Campan, sister of Edmond Charles), 7, 19, 26, 29, 32, 48, 66, 79, 80, 91, 95, 96, 97, 121, 122, 124, 155 ff., 369, 379, 383, 384, 387, 392, 398–400
Genet, Julie Françoise (sister of Edmond Charles), 7, 19–20, 66, 121
Genet, Marie Anne Louise (Cardon), mother of Edmond Charles Genet, 5, 6, 7, 383
Genet, Pierre Michel (uncle of Edmond Charles Genet), 5, 12–13, 65, 156
Genet family, the, 4 ff.; daughters of the house ladies-in-waiting to Queen Marie Antoinette, 19–21
Geneva, Republic of, Genet's mission to, 123
George III, 29, 74, 75, 241
Gérard, French agent in America, 68
Gerry, Elbridge, 384
Gibraltar, 72, 73
Giessen, university of, 59 ff.
Gillou, Commodore, 66, 185, 186
Girard, Stephen, 241, 290
Girondists, the, 120, 125, 128, 131, 132, 133, 134, 142, 146, 147, 165, 245–6, 276, 286, 365
Goethe, 15
Graydon, Alexander, 170, 196
Great Britain, *see* England

Hamilton, Alexander, 162, 164, 180, 183, 188, 190, 202, 210, 262, 313, 385, 394, 406; his place in American affairs, 154–5; hostility to Jefferson, 154, 170 ff.; contrasted with Robespierre, 165; attitude towards recognition of Genet, 173 ff.; on Genet's popular reception, 204–6; not amenable to paying French debt before it was due, 225–7; indictment of French cause in America, 281–2; on Genet's alleged threat to appeal to the people, 319 ff.
Hammond, British minister to America, 316, 317
Hammond, Abner, 257, 357
Hammond, Samuel, 257, 358
Hancock, John, 328, 347
Hauterive, French Consul at New York, 148, 235, 301, 355
Hébert, 120
Higginson, Stephen, 387
Hortalez and Company, 22, 33, 39, 46

Imlay, Gilbert, 247, 248
Izard, Ralph, 34, 38, 46, 185, 186, 188, 191, 234, 266, 368

Jackson, Andrew, comment on Jefferson, 251; President, 402
Jacobin Club, the, 120, 125, 129
Jay, Sir James, 70, 73
Jay, John, as American commissioner in France, 67 ff.; French conception of him, 151; attitude on the French treaties, 177, 178; statements as to Genet's alleged threat to appeal to the people, 318 ff., 332; mission to England in 1794, 322, 406; Genet's threatened libel suit against, 329, 333 ff., 363; his treaty with England, 363, 381, 385, 409
Jefferson, Thomas, 26, 145, 149, 188, 189, 190, 194, 202, 210, 216, 232, 240, 249, 308, 311, 313, 316, 323, 338, 343, 354, 356, 406 ff.; part taken in preliminaries of French Revolution, 126–7; French conception of him, 150, 151, 153–4; conflict between, and Hamilton, 154, 170 ff.; idol of the democrats, 166; waxing and waning opinions of, on French Revolution, 168; character and views of, as recorded by comtemporaries, 171–2; favors reception and recognition of Genet, 173 ff.; anomalous solution of the problem and anonymous attack on the government's policy, 180 ff.; on purport of Genet's mission, 207; platitudes and quibblings on theories of international law by, 208, 223–4, 227–8; Genet's intimate association with and misplaced trust in, 211–14, 234; controversy with Genet over interpretation of the treaties, 227 ff., 262–3; defines line of three miles from coast as that of territorial jurisdiction, 241–2; his repeated association with schemes against Spanish possessions, and in especial with those of Genet, 250 ff.; his report to Washington of Genet's alleged threat to appeal to the people, 265, 271, 281, 320 ff.; reasons for his abandonment of Genet, 266–8; Genet's picture of his private relations with, 273; opposes dismissal of Genet, 282;

Jefferson, Thomas—*Continued*
letter to Morris in Paris requesting Genet's recall, 283 ff.; advice to Randolph on Genet's libel case, 333, 334; Vice-President, 386; letter from Genet to, of July 4, 1797, 394 ff. (printed in full, 413 ff.)
Joinville, Prince de, 126
Jones, John Paul, 31–2, 86, 87
Josephine, Empress, 399
Jumonville, Coulon, 22, 29–30

King, Rufus, 268, 406; his statements as to Genet's alleged threat to appeal to the people, 318 ff., 332; Genet's threatened libel suit against, 329, 333 ff., 363; record of Washington's refusal to surrender Genet, 362
Knox, Gen. Henry, 173, 176, 216, 219, 250, 262, 281, 282, 319, 320, 321, 335, 337

Lachaise, emissary of Genet to Kentucky, 345, 358
La Fayette, 26, 50, 81, 128, 209, 210, 398
La Luzerne, French agent in America, 68, 71
Lamballe, Princess de, 32, 67, 82, 120
Lauzun, 165
Lavoisier, 78
Lebrun, French Minister of Foreign Affairs, 119, 124, 128, 248, 276, 411
Lee, Arthur, 22, 24, 28, 31, 38, 39, 40, 46, 47
Lee, William, 38, 39, 41, 45–7, 387
Lequoi, sent as agent to Boston by Genet, 346, 347, 348, 349
Lesage, 48, 49
"Letters of an American Farmer," Crèvecœur's, 66, 372
Lindblom, Mr., tutor of Edmond Charles Genet, 8, 14, 48, 62
Livingston, Edward, 258, 333, 342, 388, 402
Logan, Dr., 213
Louis XV of France, 3, 6, 20
Louis XVI of France, 11, 19, 20, 27, 30, 67, 82, 91, 94 ff.; attempted flight of, from Paris, 98–9; question of putting him to death, 125–6; plan to banish him to America, 126 ff.; trial and execution of, 132–4
Louis XVII of France, 79, 91; the mystery of, and legends concerning, 135 ff.
Louis XVIII of France, 82, 93, 137, 138, 139, 366, 400
Louis Philippe, 129, 402

Louisiana territory, French schemes regarding, 142–3, 245 ff., 258–61, 345 ff., 356 ff.
Lyonnet, New Orleans merchant, 247, 248, 249

MacIntosh, General, 257
Madison, James, 69, 145, 151, 176, 181, 183, 207, 229, 250, 251, 267, 328
Maine, Duchess du, 4
Mangourit, Michael Angelo, French Consul at Charleston, 185–6, 190, 191, 250, 252, 254, 256, 257, 328, 345, 346, 355, 359; 369, 380, 381, 382
Marat, 120, 125, 132, 165, 205, 246
Maria Theresa, Empress, 80
Marie Antoinette, Queen, 19, 20–1, 26, 34, 49, 50, 51, 53, 79, 80, 82, 83, 91, 95 ff., 121, 122, 286
Marriage of Figaro, Beaumarchais', 67, 79, 81
Marshall, John, 175, 384
Mazzei, 182
Mezières, emissary of Genet to Canada, 344
Michaux, André, botanist, connection with Genet's schemes in the Southwest, 253, 255, 260, 261, 358
Mifflin, Thomas, Governor of Pennsylvania, 216, 262, 265, 319, 320, 321
Mirabeau, 128
Miranda, Francisco, 247, 249, 250, 251, 256
Mississippi River, navigation of, 68, 142, 145–6, 250
Moissonnier, Genet's secretary in Russia, 118; accompanies him to America, 156; Consul at Baltimore, 240; 369; urges Genet to return to France, 370–2, 378–9, 380
Monroe, James, 325, 326, 328, 329; opposes Genet's return to France, 381–2
Montmorin, French Minister of Foreign Affairs, 94, 95, 99, 101, 116, 120, 177
Moreau de Saint Méry, 162, 187, 213, 372
Morris, Gouverneur, American Minister to France, 124, 130, 144, 151, 172, 286, 287, 288, 339, 352, 353, 362, 406
Morris, Robert, 151
Moultrie, William, Governor of South Carolina, 186, 187–8, 190, 191, 250, 327, 354, 357
"Mountain," the, 125, 126, 131 ff., 246, 276, 286
Moustier, de, French Minister at Cologne, 58, 59; notes on American political figures, 150, 152, 153

Mutiny in French fleet in New York harbor, 300

Nancrède, French professor at Harvard, 238, 240, 327, 346–7
Napoleon I, 138, 383, 393, 398, 399
Nassau-Siegen, Prince de, 86, 109, 110, 112, 113, 116
National Convention, the, 120
Necker, 89
New Orleans, 252
Ney, Marshal, 399
Nicaragua, Lake, considered as a means of communication between the oceans, 144
Noailles, Vicomte de, royalist agent in America, 173, 191, 195, 212, 214, 301, 316
North, Lord, 74
Nova Scotia, 143

Oeller's Tavern, 162, 214, 215
Osgood, Martha Brandon, Genet's second wife, 400, 403
Osterman, Count, prophetic remark of, regarding Louis XVI, 30, 91
Otto, French consular agent in America, 148, 150, 152, 153, 177

Paine, Thomas, 128, 133, 134, 247, 288
Pascal, one of Genet's secretaries, 156, 301, 340, 341, 369, 380, 384, 385
Passport, Genet's, from French Revolutionary government, 200
Patriot Genet, privateer, 190, 223
Paul, Grand Duke, of Russia (afterwards Czar), 87, 88–9, 93–4
Peter III of Russia, 23, 88
Petite Democrate, privateer, affair of the, 262 ff., 330, 343
Philadelphia in 1793, 162 ff.; Genet's arrival and reception at, 195 ff., 203 ff., 214–16; French Society of Friends of Liberty and Equality of, 219; first Democratic Society in, 220; the plague of 1793 in, 281
Philip Egalité, 133–4
Pichon, one of Genet's secretaries, letter concerning his chief's contest with Washington, 351–3; 369, 380, 383, 384–5
Pickering, Timothy, on French claims to America's gratitude, 178–9
Pinckney, Charles C., 384
Pisgignoux, Spanish spy, 345
Pitt, 75
Plague of 1793, in Philadelphia, 281; in New York, 300
Poland, first partition of, 27
Polignac, Countess de, 32
Polverel, French commissioner to Santo Domingo, 271, 291 ff., 303
Pontleroy, French agent in America, 4
Port-au-Prince, Santo Domingo, 292
Potemkin, Prince, 86, 87, 92–3, 94
Priestley, Dr. Joseph, 78
Privateers, Genet's instructions as to, 141; his claims as to French rights, and contentions as to French privateers and prizes in America, 174–5, 208, 223–4, 229 ff., 234 ff., 261 ff.; armed by Genet in Charleston, 190; Genet's opinion on the whole question of, 242–3

Randolph, Edmund, Attorney General, 173, 176, 224, 329, 333, 334, 335, 406; Secretary of State, 336, 362, 363
Randolph, John, opinion of Jefferson, 251
Rayneval, French emissary to London, 68, 69, 72, 78
Rittenhouse, David, 203
Robespierre, 120, 123, 125, 137, 138, 165, 205, 245, 246, 276, 287, 361, 363, 364, 374, 378, 380, 389, 406; Genet's belief that he was an agent of the Royalists, 365–6
Rochambeau, 51, 165
Rochefoucauld, 81
Rohan, Cardinal de, 79
Roland, 124, 127, 128, 132, 246
Roland, Madame, 124, 125, 126, 129, 132, 276, 286

Saint-Just, 125, 246
Sans Culotte, French privateer, 190
Santo Domingo, revolution in, in 1793, 271, 289 ff.; English invasion of, 308, 314
Sartines, 40, 42, 43, 47, 53
Sayre, Stephen, 247, 248
Ségur, de, Louis Philippe, Comte, French Ambassador at St. Petersburg, 82, 85, 86, 87, 89, 90
Sercey, Admiral, in Santo Domingan revolution of 1793, 290, 294, 295, 296, 302, 303
Seven Years' War, the, 3, 27
Shelburne, Lord, 68, 74, 75
Shelby, Governor, of Kentucky, 253, 255, 260, 356
Siéyès, 368, 381
Society of the Friends of the Blacks, 290, 298
Sonthonax, French commissioner to Santo Domingo, 271, 291 ff., 303
Spain, secret treaty with France, 68, 72

Spanish America, French schemes against, 142, 245 ff., 345 ff., 356 ff.
Stamp Act, the, 3, 78
Stanislas Augustus, King of Poland, 84
Stormont, Lord, 25, 29, 31, 75

Talleyrand, 372, 381, 385, 387, 392, 398
Tanguy La Boissière, Santo Domingan journalist, papers of, disclosing conspiracy, 303, 305, 308, 309
Tate, William, 257, 358, 359
Temple, the, royal family confined in, 120
Ternant, French minister to America, 140, 149, 150, 190, 208, 214
Théveneau de Francy, 34, 38, 39
Théveneau de Morande, 34, 36
Three-mile limit, Thomas Jefferson defines as bound of territorial jurisdiction, 241–2
Toussaint L'Ouverture, 290
Treaties, the Franco-American of 1778, 28 ff., 173 ff., 180, 206–8, 224–5, 227 ff.
Tuileries, the, 91, 95, 99, 119, 120, 121, 132, 398

United States, interest of France in British-American affairs, 3–4, 22; commissioners in Europe during and after the Revolution, 25 ff.; French alliance of 1778, 28 ff.; peace negotiations in Paris, 67 ff.; national debt to France, efforts of Genet to collect it prior to its maturity, 144, 225–7; French conceptions of leading figures in politics in, 150 ff.; attitude of rank and file of populace towards the French Revolution, 166 ff.; realization by government of delicacy of the situation created by Genet's mission and question as to observance of the treaties, 173 ff.; the treaties ignored and proclamation of neutrality issued, 180; the Democratic Societies and pro-French agitation of the republican press, 219 ff.; war with Spain expected in 1793, 250; war with France, 1799–1800, 386–7

Valmy, battle of, 120
Van Buren, Martin, 402
Varennes, flight of the royal family to, 98–9
Vergennes, French Minister of Foreign Affairs, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 31, 36, 37, 42, 56, 64–5, 68 ff., 81
Vergniaud, 124, 126, 127, 133, 134, 286
Versailles, the royal family taken from, to Paris by the populace, 90–1
Villoison, 8–9, 13 ff., 21, 23, 36, 51, 54, 56, 60, 62, 63, 64
Volney, 128
Voltaire, 9, 10, 12, 89

Washington, George, 22–3, 29, 145, 152–3, 162, 173 ff., 178, 184, 188, 189, 202, 203, 228, 250, 264, 337, 341, 354, 355, 356, 360, 365, 406 ff.; criticisms of, in republican press, 167; Genet's official reception by, and his description of, 208–11; insists that French privateers leave American waters, 223; incensed at Genet's alleged threat to appeal to the people, 265; Genet's private interview with, 269–71; indignation at republican lampoon, 282; letter of Genet to, regarding his alleged threat to appeal to the people, 322–3; action in regard to Genet's libel case, 333, 334, 335–6; messages to Congress on Genet, 350, 353; comparison of Fauchet and Genet, 359; refuses to surrender Genet to Fauchet, 362
Washington, Martha, 162, 166, 269
Watt, James, 78
Webster, Noah, 327, 410
West Indies, French, 175, 206, 229
Wieland, 15
Wilkinson, General James, 259, 261, 345
Wolcott, Oliver, quoted on Jefferson, 171, 172

Yorktown, surrender of, 51, 52, 65, 178, 179
Yrujo, Don Carlos de, Spanish Minister to America, 162

PRESIDENTIAL YEARS

HERE is a fascinating history of the founding of the Republic, from the creation of the "new roof" in 1787 when the Federal Convention, that "assembly of demi-gods" as Jefferson named them, sitting behind closed and guarded doors at Philadelphia, studied the question of a new form of government for the States in place of the old articles of Confederation . . . to the defeat of Douglas by Abe Lincoln.

A history of the days when presidential campaigns were not political campaigns at all; simply contests between modes of dress, varieties of diet or styles of architecture, all set to words and music.

As we read about this quaint period in American history there pass before us the hurly-burly of State convention; the uproar of pamphlets, squibs and cards; the bawling, screaming, singing and parading with torches, banners, riots and stone-slinging . . . all the ballyhoo of the early days of the Democratic and Republican parties.

From the *Black Republicans* to the *Singing Whigs*, we have here the whole exciting story of the birth and political growth of these United States, all set against a vivid background of fife and drum, shouting and high hats, torches and placards and constant parading.

MEADE MINNIGERODE

COLLEGE OF ALAMEDA LIBRARY
E313.G28 c.1
Jefferson, friend of France, 1793; the career of Edmo
3 2222 00002334 3

WAS the lost Dauphin of France kidnapped or poi
would poison him . . . the Robespierre faction . . . or his own uncle? Mysteries such as these, ones that have confounded historians and biographers for years, are illumined by these private documents of Citizen Genet, on which "Jefferson—Friend of France" is based.

Since Citizen Genet's time this vast and important collection of papers has passed through only two pairs of hands, aside from Genet's son and his grand-daughter in whose possession the papers are now.

Having been assured, some time ago, by various distant relatives of Genet that the papers no longer existed, Mr. Minnigerode publicly lamented the fact in an article of his. The article elicited a response from the grand-daughter of Genet who, realizing then what a vital relation to history these papers might have, offered Mr. Minnigerode access to the trunk wherein reposed what is probably the largest collection of family documents intact — or almost intact. (There is an additional, much smaller collection at the Library at Congress).

In this mass of papers there are rough drafts of practically all Genet's official dispatches—both Russian and American. The Russian drafts contain a minute history of European intrigues during the reign of Catherine II.

The history of Europe, of the West Indies and of America is enriched and expanded by the material brought to light through these papers . . . While to the reading world is contributed a vivid and arresting book.